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THESIS

**LIBYA: A CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT IN A FAILING
STATE**

by

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March 2015

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LIBYA: A CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT IN A FAILING STATE

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

The Arab Spring spread throughout the Middle East and North Africa, and what started in hope quickly devolved into struggles for formal and informal power. Violence in Libya was intensified by institutions' inabilities to maintain governance, contain violence, and quell the rise of armed groups. Power in Libya is in constant contention by opportunistic tribal and regional militias, Islamist groups, and government and military power brokers.

Libya is on the verge of becoming a failed state; allowing Libya to fail will have local, regional, and international repercussions. The challenge is to understand why the loosely formed alliances between government and tribal, regional, and Islamist militias are falling apart. The introduction of the Islamic State in Libya increases the urgency for these disparate groups to resolve their differences.

This thesis concludes that Gaddafi nurtured a sentiment of distrust between the people, Islamists, and government institutions. This trust deficit in post-revolutionary Libya has stymied cooperation and progress. Any meaningful solutions will have to address the core issue of social trust, the emergence of the Islamic State, and economic weakness before reconciliation or reforms can occur.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AU	African Union
AAS	Ansar Al Sharia
AAL	Ansar Al Sharia in Libya
AAS-D	Ansar Al Sharia in Derna
AAS-B	Ansar Al Sharia in Benghazi
AQ	Al Qaida
AQIM	Al Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb
ATGM	Anti-Tank Guided Missile
BMA	British Military Administration
CM	Competition Militia
COL	Colonel
DRP	Demobilization and Reintegration Programs
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EM	Emergency Militia
EU	European Union
FFP	Fund for Peace
FSI	Fragile State Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNC	General National Congress
HoR	House of Representatives
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
ISIS	Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
JCP	Justice and Construction Party
LIFG	Libyan Islamic Fighting Group
LNA	Libyan National Army
LROR	Libyan Revolutionary Operations Room
LSP	Local Security Providers
MANPADS	Man Portable Air Defense System
MB	Muslim Brotherhood

MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NFA	National Forces Alliance
NTC	National Transitional Council
PFG	Petroleum Facilities Guard
PM	Prime Minister
RC	Revolutionary Committees
RCC	Revolutionary Command Council
RCD-ML	Rally for Congolese Democracy- Movement for Liberation
SJC	Supreme Judicial Council
SPLAJ	Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
SSC	Supreme Security Committee
SSR	Security Sector Reform
STDS	Special Tribunal for the Defense of the State
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNSCR	UN Security Council Resolution
UNSMIL	UN Support Mission in Libya
VEO	Violent Extremist Organizations

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I. LIBYA: A CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT IN A FAILING STATE

Beginning in December 2010, the Arab Spring spread throughout the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and marked a period of hope for the region. However, as quickly as it came, the Arab Spring subsided, and what little hope remained devolved into violent struggles for formal and informal power. The chaos that ensued affected every country in a different manner. Some countries, like Egypt and Algeria, had well-established institutions available to quell further violence and prevent civil war; others, like Libya, had far weaker institutions that were significantly less capable of ensuring peace. Libya appears to be on the verge of becoming a failed state; allowing Libya to fail will have local, regional, and international security implications.

A. THE THREAT

Internally, a revolutionary fervor has seized grassroots organizations; tribally aligned militias have been co-opted by the government to serve as a quasi-security apparatus; criminal networks exploit the chaos; violent Islamists claim territory and push for the establishment of a fundamentalist interpretation of Sharia; and political, military, and local leaders vie for power.

Regionally, a failed Libya will present a vector by which terrorist organizations can project power. Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) took advantage of the chaos following Muammar Qaddafi's fall from power to raid ammunition depots near Benghazi and Ajdabiyah, where they obtained large amounts of heavy munitions—most notably, SA-7 surface-to-air missiles and anti-tank guided missiles (ATGM).¹ Algeria, Egypt, United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Tunisia are actively preparing defenses, instituting policies to minimize the impacts of potential spillover, and providing assistance (of questionable value).

¹ Ricardo Rene Laremont, "Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb: Terrorism and Counterterrorism in the Sahel," *African Security* 4, no. 4 (2011): 255.

Internationally, Western powers are hesitant to intervene, though second- and third-order effects have already been experienced. Operation Serval was launched by the French to quell a joint Islamist and Tuareg rebellion in Northern Mali—a situation for which the fall of Colonel Gaddafi served as a direct precursor, and arguably a catalyst.² Meanwhile, the multinational coalition that was formed to battle the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) may get drawn into Libya if Islamists continue to claim Libyan territory in the name of ISIS.

B. RESEARCH QUESTION AND SIGNIFICANCE

What is driving political instability in Libya, and how is a faltering Libyan state contributing to regional and international insecurity? In the wake of the Arab Spring, Libya has plunged into civil war. Governmental, tribal, and terrorist networks are capitalizing on opportunities wrought by the general chaos, causing ripple effects within local, regional, and international communities. If regional associations and the international community have an interest in preventing Libya's failure, what measures or policies can be taken to reverse this trend?

Research into Libya's status is relevant for three reasons. First, the implications of a failed Libya have had, and will continue to have, negative effects on regional and international security interests. Second, the characteristics of the Libyan state are by no means unique. Libyan governance is patriarchal, comprising purposely weak institutions and displaying a strong sense of tribalism—characteristics seen through much of the developing world. Finally, violent Islamist organizations are enforcing their program, raising fears that Libya will become not only a “breeding grounds of instability, mass migration, and murder’...[but also] reservoirs and exporters of terror.”³ Researchers correlate some or all of these attributes with failing or failed states elsewhere. This thesis contributes a case study and cautionary tale to the literature on state failure and extremist organizations in the Middle East and around the world.

² Yehudit Ronen, “Libya, the Tuareg and Mali on the Eve of the ‘Arab Spring’ and in its Aftermath: an Anatomy of Changed Relations,” *The Journal of North African Studies* 18, no. 4 (2013): 554-555.

³ Robert I. Rotberg, “Failed States in a World of Terror,” *Foreign Affairs* 81, no. 4 (2002): 128.

C. RESEARCH DESIGN, METHODOLOGY, AND SCOPE

This research is designed as a process trace. The research uses a historical narrative to describe Libya's layers of social, political, and economic complexity. Using this method, one can discover a great amount of detailed research from which to derive a true understanding of the complex Libyan environment.

Three primary analyses are performed. The first, presented in Chapter II, consists of a historical study of the evolution of post-colonial Libya—specifically, of the state of Jamahiriya. This chapter examines vital decisions made by Gaddafi and how they influenced the organization and operation of Jamahiriya, and asks to what extent the problems vexing Libya before the Arab Spring carried over to post-revolutionary Libya.

Chapter III analyzes the contemporary environment, from the fall of Gaddafi in late 2011–2014. A combination of scholarly journals and open-source media are used to identify critical changes pre- and post-revolution. The chapter is divided into sections on the political environment and on Libyan armed factions. Illuminating the allegiances of armed groups is a critical step in parsing the true nature of the instability and power struggle within Libya.

Chapter IV focuses on the fallout of some of the major historical and contemporary decisions described in chapters II and III, presents conclusions, and makes recommendations for future engagement, aiming at local solutions and ways regional and international actors can aid political stability. The objective is to gain a newfound understanding of the sociopolitical landscape and to tailor responses to the specific case of Libya.

D. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review focuses on failed state theory and its potential applications to the situation in Libya. The purpose is to highlight issues surrounding the failed state label, how countries have overcome state failure, and potential roles for the international community. This section is divided into the following four topics: defining a failed state; indicators of a failed state; failed states and insecurity; and conflict resolution.

1. Defining a Failed State

State failure is not a new phenomenon, but deserves increased attention. Before globalization, weak states had fewer implications for regional and international security. That dynamic has changed, and today “preventing states from failing, and resuscitating those that do fail, are thus strategic and moral imperatives.”⁴ A good procedure for examining state failure is first to explore the precursors of failure, next examine how failed states contribute to global insecurity, and finally to analyze the lessons from states that have already failed. It is important to begin by defining what are strong, collapsed, weak, and failed states.

The differences between a strong and a collapsed state are summed up by the ability of government to provide political goods. These difficult-to-measure political goods are demanded by citizens as part of the social contract, from providing security to “tolerance of dissent.”⁵ Strong states are capable of securing their territory, providing the people with high-quality public goods, maintaining lines of communication, and providing and funding health and education programs.⁶

Collapsed states, on the other hand, offer no such public goods. These states are void of any authority, aside from communal authority or ad-hoc arrangements, and are “a mere geographic expression.”⁷ Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Somalia are a few commonly referenced collapsed states that have suffered internal insecurity due to local powerbrokers who compete to expand their power by any means necessary—often in the form of violence or illicit activities such as smuggling. Despite the spiral of anarchy that follows the collapse of a failed state, these states can overcome their collapsed status with a modicum of governance. The difficulty arises when authority becomes so greatly diffused to powerbrokers that re-centralizing power becomes an unpalatable concept to

⁴ Rotberg, “Failed States in a World of Terror,” 127.

⁵ Robert I. Rotberg, “The Failure and Collapse of Nation-States: Breakdown, Prevention, and Repair,” in *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 2-3.

⁶ Rotberg, “Failure and Collapse,” 4.

⁷ Ibid., 9.

the new elites, because it requires them to relinquish some of their own newly obtained power.

Weak states are defined as “states in crisis...[that] may be inherently weak because of geographical, physical, or fundamental economic constraints.”⁸ Weak states often have domestic problems centering around ethnicity, language, or religion, but not to the point of violence. Weak states typically experience some form of public-goods degradation if they fluctuate between strong and weak. An autocracy is considered a weak state despite its monolithic appearance, due to the low number and quality of public goods offered its population.⁹

Finally, a failed state is “a state in anarchy...that is no longer able or willing to perform the fundamental tasks of a nation-state in the modern world.”¹⁰ Failed states have little ability to control their territories; elites and security apparatus that extort or oppress the citizenry; and a system in which public goods are either purposefully withheld or impossible for the state to deliver. Additionally, visible gaps in the security apparatus invite the expansion of illicit markets. The increase in lawlessness becomes a vector for criminal organizations to exploit through protection rackets and introduces new weapons and drugs into the state. The inability of the state to project power to its peripheries enables freedom of movement for illicit gangs and armed groups.¹¹

These definitions of strong and collapsed states are relatively straightforward and raise minimal controversy; however, the terms “failed” and “weak” (as well as other terms not mentioned, such as “fragile,” “failing,” “troubled,” and “under stress”) are criticized as too broad. One common critique is that an overly broad conceptualization of failed states encourages the “aggregation of very diverse sorts of states and their

⁸ Ibid., 4.

⁹ Rotberg, “Failure and Collapse,” 4-5.

¹⁰ Ibid., 5-6.

¹¹ Ibid.

problems” because too many indicators are used to identify a failed state—in brief, too many states qualify for the weak and failed state label.¹²

The Fund for Peace (FFP) organization is criticized for its aggregation of state-failure data and application of that data to a large number of states. Its quantitative analysis lumps diverse groups together, and the danger in this occurs when policy recommendations are made using a “one-size-fits-all ‘state-building’ answer to ‘failed states,’” ultimately “enhancing the capacity of military and police and judiciaries when these are instruments of repression, corruption, ethnic discrimination, and/or organized crime” and potentially serving to conflate their problems.¹³ However, this critique of failed-state theorists and the FFP is slightly biased. The FFP does incorporate qualitative analysis into its assessments of failed states and is not as cookie-cutter as some suggest.

Robert I. Rotberg, former director of the Program on Intrastate Conflict, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution, has received similar criticism, but Rotberg would agree with some of his critics. Rotberg explains that “Zimbabwe is an instructive case” that shows how “miscreant leaders,” such as Mugabe, can abuse “quiet diplomacy” offered by the United States and United Nations to further their own agendas and repress the citizenry.¹⁴ Rotberg contends that sanctions and public denouncement of Mugabe came far too late. He explains that addressing predatory leaders and states in earnest, and not passively through quiet diplomacy, would obviate the need to dedicate United Nations (UN) resources in support of these areas.¹⁵

A better critique of the failed-state framework identifies the problem as failed institutions, not failed states. This perspective allows for more precise policies to address specific issues in government, whereas before, empirical measurements were made based on desired outcomes, making “it impossible for researchers to understand the nature of

¹² Charles T. Call, “The Fallacy of the ‘Failed State,’” *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 8 (2008): 1494-1495.

¹³ Call, “Fallacy of the Failed State,” 1496-1497.

¹⁴ Rotberg, “Failed States in a World of Terror,” 135.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 137.

the relationship between state failure and these outcomes.”¹⁶ For example, the FFP index may look at the security-apparatus category and use indicators such as rebel activity, internal conflict, and fatalities, but these all pertain to desired outcomes. A paradigm shift to looking at institutional weakness would allow an analyst to delve into indicators of institutional weakness such as whether the military is being paid, police have the right equipment, and the infrastructure can connect security forces with underdeveloped areas. A holistic approach geared towards prescribing solutions for failed states in a precise manner is not a concept that is lost on failed-state scholars, but rather, a concept that fails to translate well, given the definition of weak state and failed states.

This paper addresses the weakness of Libya in terms of institutional weaknesses whenever possible. This approach allows for unique findings that, in turn, suggest direct recommendations rather than a generic solution to a set of pre-determined indicators. This is not to say that other research on state failure is of negligible value; in fact, quite the opposite. Indicators obtained from organizations like FFP can illuminate which public goods are not being delivered—which can direct focus to a specific institution. Finally, it is important to remember that even though Libya has entered a period of civil conflict, it is not yet a failed state. Its institutions, however weak, do exist and do attempt to provide public goods.

2. Indicators of Failed States

Weak and failed states are often the victims of their history, whether because of a political culture that developed as a result of colonial governance or from having been Cold War pawns, or other reasons. Some countries are debilitated through poor or self-interested leadership, as was the case with presidents Mobutu of Zaire/Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Barre of Somalia. A country’s historical and cultural context sets the stage for its economic and political trajectory. In general, the economies of weak and failed states tend to be patriarchal and favor the elites and those closest to them. Corruption rises to the forefront, money is laundered in foreign banks, and social

¹⁶ Natasha Ezrow and Erica Frantz, “Revisiting the Concept of the Failed State: Bringing the State Back In,” *Third World Quarterly* 34, no.8 (2013): 1324.

services go unfunded and eventually dwindle away. Politically, “leaders and their associates subvert prevailing democratic norms, coerce legislatures and bureaucracies...strangle judicial independence, block civil society, and gain control over security and defense forces” leading to a state operating without consent or consensus.¹⁷ The combination of economic and political maleficence results in a loss of legitimacy, and the only recourse left to a people is to mobilize along pre-existing lines, generally tribal, ethnic, religious, or communal.¹⁸

The Fund for Peace argues that every incident that devolves into a revolution or humanitarian crisis stems “from social, economic, and political pressures that have not been managed by professional, legitimate, and representative state institutions.”¹⁹ The quantitative analysis provided by FFP is grounded in qualitative research, based on twelve indicators of state failure and categorized under social, economic, and political and military pressures. Under social indicators, the four subgroups include group grievances, human flight and brain drain, refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), and demographic pressures. Economic indicators for state failure include uneven economic development, poverty, and economic decline. Finally, political and military indicators fall into six subcategories: state legitimacy, public services, human rights and rule of law, fractionalized elites, security apparatus, and external intervention. The organization produces a fragile-states index (FSI), which ranks countries based on the twelve indicators for fragile states and can produce valuable trend data, such as “in the 2012 index, Libya set a record for the most severe year-on-year worsening of a country in the history of the index (a record that still stands), rising from 50th to 11th as the civil war’s effects took hold.”²⁰ The ability to use these indicators and examine records historically is critical for policymakers examining whether a country is trending towards stability or failure.²¹

¹⁷ Rotberg, “Failed States in a World of Terror,” 128-129.

¹⁸ Ibid., 128-130.

¹⁹ “The Methodology Behind the Index,” The Fund for Peace, <http://ffp.statesindex.org/methodology>.

²⁰ J.J. Messner, “Failed States Index 2014: Somalia Displaced as Most-Fragile State” The Fund for Peace, June 24, 2014, Washington, DC, <http://library.fundforpeace.org/fsi14-overview>.

²¹ “The Methodology behind the Index,” The Fund for Peace.

Another method of looking at state failure is through institutional failure. Institutions are an important component of everyday life, but lack influence in weak and failed states. Administrative, judicial, security, and political institutions can be measured by observing staffing processes (hiring, firing, and promotions); judicial transparency and autonomy; security-force training, funding, and civilian control. Another important factor is whether political institutions have checks and balances between the branches of government, whether parliament members are chosen based on merit or loyalties, and whether political institutions participate in budget making and approval. Some leaders intentionally make institutions weak to keep potential rivals at bay. As an example, Muammar Gaddafi purposely made military hierarchy, ranks, and assignments ambiguous and arbitrary, which caused chaos regarding mission and purpose, confusion among the ranks regarding superiority, and plain ineffectiveness.²²

Daniel C. Esty examined the 40-year period between 1955 and 1994 and derived three indicators of a state's failure and collapse: (1) a closed economic system rather than one open to international trade, (2) high infant mortality, and (3) lack of democracy. Esty used the infant mortality rate as a correlation to quality of life, but later concluded that GDP per capita was a more salient metric.²³

Another look at indicators of state failure is broken into three categories: economic, political, and level of violence. The economic indicators include leaders who are unwilling to reverse downward economic conditions, but prefer to line their coffers and those of their patrons. This leads to shortages in food, health, and education and eventually creates a vector for organized crime. Political indicators are similar—strongmen marginalize bureaucratic institutions, coerce the legislature, and promote patronage. Finally, increases in tribal violence, civil war, and, most importantly, upsurges in civilian combat deaths are cause for concern. Predicting the future using these variables can be troublesome. One cannot predict imminent state failure or collapse based

²² Ezrow "Bringing the State Back," 1326-1333.

²³ Robert I. Rotberg, "Failed States, Collapsed States, Weak States: Causes and Indicators," in *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror*, ed. Robert I. Rothberg, (Washington, DC: Brookings Institute Press, 2003), 20.

on a total number of civilian deaths per capita, nor does a specific number exist that correlates a percentage drop in GDP with state failure.²⁴

The menu of indicators for failed and weak states is long and at times vague. Nevertheless, these indicators and symptoms help direct research to the root of the problem, whether it lies with an institution, leader, or policy. As is the case with Libya, one can find the concept of social capital subsumed in the theories of state failure. Social capital, when achieved, is “defined as shared norms that promote cooperation between two or more individuals...by fostering trust and reducing the incentive to cheat.”²⁵ In 2009, Libya ranked 118th out of 185 countries on the Social Capital Achievement Index, but in 2012 it dropped to 135 out of 185.²⁶ Both the 2009 and the 2012 scores were unfavorable and help to establish that a lack of social cohesion existed in Libya before the Arab Spring revolution; the lack of cohesion may not be due to the post-revolutionary violence.

Social capital is a broad field of study, but two important components of it are social trust and social norms. Social trust and norms describe why groups adopt certain attitudes and perceptions. Social trust can encompass everything from confidence in institutions (legal, social, and public), economic markets, and trust in people; it suggests that in order to increase social cooperation, a group must extend its trust beyond its immediate circle of trust.²⁷ Similarly, social norms are telling of a society’s outlook because they are grounded in the idea reciprocity, or that “actions towards others will be returned in the future” and, as a result, will “reduce the incentive to cheat.”²⁸ One of many social norms in Libya is the desire to smuggle subsidized goods to neighboring markets, which indicates a lack of trust in the economic institutions and the authority of the government.

²⁴ Ibid., 21-22.

²⁵ Dan Lee, Kap-Young Jeong, and Sean Chae, “Measuring Social Capital in East Asia and Other World Regions: Index of Social Capital for 72 Countries,” *Global Economic Review* 40, no. 4 (2011): 385.

²⁶ Stephen B. Young, Noel Purcell, and Davlet Babajanov, “Social Capital Achievement: 2012 Country Rankings,” *Pegasus* 3, no. 4 (2013): 17.

²⁷ Lee, “Measuring Social Capital,” 389, 406.

²⁸ Ibid., 390.

3. Failed States and Insecurity

Weak and failed states are feared as havens for illicit, violent, and ungoverned areas capable of funneling, funding, and training some of the most brutal violent extremist organizations (VEO). The second- and third-order effects of these states impact local, regional, and international policies. A “ruler’s personal survival is often at odds with the task of building strong state agencies,” which explains why “President Mobutu has manipulated and coopted illicit trade to finance his power, intervened in ethnic battles to promote allies, and claimed” international aid to build stronger ties internally and externally.²⁹ Decisions based on the self-preservation of rulers often do more harm than good to a state and invite greater local, regional, and international insecurity.

Militias often arise as alternatives to state security and can serve as stabilizing agents for short periods of time, but the longer they are allowed to engage in security activities, the more embedded and necessary they become to civil society—and thus the more counterproductive to state building. Three types of militias can be distinguished, based on their political aims. The first category is local security providers (LSPs)—local strongmen who maintain order in their own areas and step in when the government is unwilling or incapable of providing political goods locally. Second are emergency militias (EMs), which form in response to an outbreak of civil war and are used by all sides. Competition militias (CMs), the third category, are a byproduct of democratic competition. CMs are used by political elites to gain power, control, and votes.³⁰ All of these militia types can be found in Libya; however, the most common are the CM and LSP.

When militias form along ethnic, tribal, or local lines and attack one another, the international community tends to dismiss the violence as internal and contained, and therefore a matter for the sovereign state to manage; this is called retribalization.³¹ Weak

²⁹ William Reno, “War, Markets, and the Reconfiguration of West Africa’s Weak States,” *Comparative Politics* 29, no. 4 (1997), 494-495.

³⁰ Clionadh Raleigh, “Pragmatic and Promiscuous: Explaining the Rise of Competitive Political Militias Across Africa,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* published online (July 3, 2014): 3.

³¹ Raleigh, “Pragmatic and Promiscuous,” 21.

and failed states are at great risk for internal insecurity when “a state’s territory dissolves into competing ethnic fiefdoms using violence as a means to legitimate separation.”³² An example of how militias can threaten internal security is seen with the Congolese Militia Rally for Congolese Democracy–Movement for Liberation (RCD–ML), which may be categorized as an EM in response to the second Congo War. The RCD–ML assumed roles typically associated with the state, such as tax collection and maintenance of roads, but what started as a regulatory power metastasized into something more predatory in nature as they proved unwilling to legitimize and work through the established government.³³ Sometimes militias do not deteriorate into localized criminal elements, as was the case with the Bakassi Boys of Nigeria, who started as an LSP and slowly evolved into a CM. The Bakassi Boys filled a gap in security, were well accepted by the population overall, and were even at times openly supported by the government. They were banned only in response to international pressure.³⁴

Weak and failed states raise regional and international concerns because “international security relies on states to protect against chaos at home and limit the cancerous spread of anarchy beyond their borders and throughout the world.”³⁵ Criminal organizations look towards weak and failed states with the inability to enforce laws because it means “low cost for producing and distributing illegal goods and services,” cheap criminal labor, and the ability to buy off state officials.³⁶ Once established, these organizations may form alliances with transnational drug organizations, terrorist groups, and illegal markets—each subverting the legitimacy of the government. Historically, failed states have suffered “porous borders, high rates of civilian casualties...[and] all remain on the humanitarian watch list as potent sources of displaced persons and refugees.”³⁷

³² Ibid.

³³ Kate Meagher, “The Strength of Weak States: Non-State Security Forces and Hybrid Governance in Africa,” *Development and Change* 43, no. 5 (2012): 1085-1089.

³⁴ Ibid., 1092-1095.

³⁵ Rotberg, “Failed States in a World of Terror,” 130.

³⁶ James Cockayne, “Chasing Shadows,” *The RUSI Journal* 158, no. 2 (2013): 13.

³⁷ Rotberg, “Failed States in a World of Terror,” 133.

IDPs can become a significant internal, regional, and international problem, as in Somalia. In the late 1980s, the “Siad [Barre] regime became infamous for its bald manipulation of numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons,” so much that the international community provided funding, which became a “steady source of income to Siad’s corrupt regime.”³⁸ In the early 1990s, IDPs caught in the middle of an internal struggle between Aideed and Barre were starved, prevented from returning home to Mogadishu, and were so shut off from humanitarian help that the international community was forced to intervene.³⁹ During the Rwandan genocide in 1994, “the most devastating illustration of ‘refugees as vectors of violence’ occurred in eastern Congo...when 1.2 million Hutu refugees poured across the border,” and, of that, over 100,000 were armed militia members.⁴⁰ The Rwandan response was pre-emptive strikes against the refugee camps; soon after, the Mobutu regime imploded.

4. Conflict Resolution and Potentials for Recovery: DDR and SSR

Security during a state’s recovery is essential for sustained growth and success. Since Libya is a state in conflict, it is relevant to examine programs that are specific to conflict-resolution strategies. Two such programs are disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) and security-sector reform (SSR).

DDR is achieved through demobilization and reintegration programs (DRPs), which push for combatants to drop their arms and rejoin society. The DRP requirements for success are: (1) political will, (2) profiling of ex-combatants and their families, (3) transparency within the system, and (4) funding.⁴¹ Neutral partners, such as the UN, are essential for ensuring successful implementation of disarmament, as was seen in Eritrea,

³⁸ Walter S. Clarke and Robert Gosende, “Somalia: Can a Collapsed State Reconstitute Itself?” in *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror*, ed. Robert I. Rothberg, (Washington, DC: Brookings Institute Press, 2003), 138.

³⁹ Clarke and Gosende, “Somalia,” 146-147.

⁴⁰ Rene Lemarchand, “The Democratic Republic of the Congo: From Failure to Potential Reconstruction,” in *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror*, ed. Robert I. Rothberg, (Washington, DC: Brookings Institute Press, 2003), 36.

⁴¹ Nat J. Colletta, Markus Kostner, and Ingo Wiederhofer, “Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration,” in *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences*, ed. Robert I. Rothberg, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 171.

East Timor, Sierra Leone, and Chad. The demobilization stage removes ex-combatants and segregates them from the population until they are reinserted as civilians. The reintegration aspects of DRP ensure that an ex-combatant has money, food, and sustenance material to survive as a civilian and that the new location is suitable for both the ex-combatant and his family. Child soldiers can require additional steps to socialize back into a community, because of their learned indifference to human life.⁴²

DDR operates in parallel with the justice process, and this becomes particularly important should the justice system be transitional (one created in support of conflict resolution). Law enforcement and justice are “largely backwards looking, but with forward-looking goals” and address “past abuses in ways that are expected to satisfy a range of needs—of the society, of victims, of state institutions, and the rule of law.”⁴³ At the heart of the conflict between DDR and the justice system is striking a balance where combatants feel safe reintegrating, and not fearful of imminent prosecution. A method of creating accountability is to involve the International Criminal Court to ensure, at minimum, that the most heinous violations of law (e.g., genocide and crimes against humanity) will be prosecuted. Other methods explored have been truth commissions to make the evolution of those events that led to violence public knowledge, and reparations to families that have experienced loss.⁴⁴

SSR is predicated on the assumption that every nation desires a professional military. The West has invested greatly in this concept. Before progress can be made in other areas of state development, a country must first be able to provide security before other public goods. Such is not always the case, and what emerges is the “concept of partnership between stakeholders who do not share the same values and aims.”⁴⁵ Another goal of SSR is to change the civil–military relationship in such a way that the military is accountable to the civil sector, which can lead to a new social contract. This social

⁴² Colletta, Kostner, and Wiederhofer, “Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration,” 172-177.

⁴³ Chandra Lekha Sriram and Johanna Herman, “DDR and Transitional Justice: Bridging the Divide,” *Conflict, Security, and Development* 9, no. 4 (2009), 458.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 458-461.

⁴⁵ Olaf Bachmann, “Civil-Military Relations in Francophone Africa and the Consequences of a Mistaken Analysis,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 25, no. 3 (2014), 608.

contract is important, particularly in the African context where “the military [culture] was...shaped according to the needs of the ruling elites and their foreign patrons...[and] became a control mechanism for the personal rule system, with its own internal clientelist dynamic.”⁴⁶ This same culture takes little interest in professionalization training, but gladly accepts materiel support. A third objective under SSR is to unify ongoing, disparate initiatives—for example the EU, United States, UN, and AU provide a common approach to training militaries. Finally, regional security improvements have been placed high on the SSR docket, but efforts to align strong northern African countries with less-capable neighbors has had mixed success.⁴⁷

E. POTENTIAL EXPLANATIONS AND HYPOTHESES

This thesis finds that the major source of instability in Libya is a trust deficit that has grown since Gaddafi ingrained in the heads of every Libyan not to trust political parties, Islamists, or institutions. This mistrust has carried over into post-revolutionary Libya.

Libya’s inability to control its own territory following the death of Gaddafi was a direct result of the system of governance Gaddafi implemented, known as *jamahiriya*. Due to substantial income from oil, the Gaddafi regime was able to use funds to implement a strong patronage network, ensure that bureaucratic institutions remained weak, and empower tribal and local leaders to typical governmental services such as rule of law. Fundamentally, *jamahiriya* strengthened the centralized power of Gaddafi and diffused remaining authority at the lowest levels of society, which resulted in the marginalization of political elites who might otherwise have challenged Gaddafi’s rule. The fall of Gadhafi as Libya’s strongman and purveyor of the patronage network left a power vacuum, in which government institutions were too weak to provide security to the population, and from a more pragmatic standpoint, unable to provide security for Libya’s natural resources.

⁴⁶ Bachmann, “Civil-Military Relations in Francophone,” 608.

⁴⁷ Bachmann, “Civil-Military Relations in Francophone,” 608-622.

Libya's weak institutions led to two destructive situations: first, the co-opting of tribal militias by the interim government to provide security for population centers and major resources; and second, the rise of opportunistic tribal militias and spread of internal violence. Islamist organizations are an amalgamation of these two scenarios. They tend to be tribally heterogeneous; they were at times co-opted by the government; and they are opportunistic. Furthermore, the inability of Islamist organizations to align with a major tribe for logistical or operational support and their nature has led some Islamist organizations, such as the Abu Mahjen Battalion, to acquire resources through criminal means, such as kidnapping for ransom and armed robbery of money transports.⁴⁸

Regional Islamists contend that the Arab Spring is a pan-Arab movement that proves the people of the Middle East do not want a secular country, and furthermore, shows the reluctance of the West to intervene as proof that the West cannot be trusted.⁴⁹ Violent Islamist groups within Libya, such as Ansar al Sharia, continue to struggle for control of government structures and territory nationally and refuse to accept any form of governance other than a fundamental interpretation of Sharia. In early September 2014, the Islamist militant group Jaish al-Islam urged the people of Derna to support ISIS.⁵⁰ Less than a month later, the group Majlis Shura Shabab al-Islam (Islamic Youth Shura Council) proclaimed the controlled territory in Derna for the caliphate of the Islamic State (IS).⁵¹

The struggle between formal and informal power was evident throughout the 42 years of Gaddafi rule and the three years post-revolution. The remainder of this thesis takes a closer look at the factors broached above, to assess the best means by which to stabilize Libya and prevent its failure.

⁴⁸ Rafaa Tabib, "Stealing the Revolution: Violence and Predation in Libya," *NOREF: Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Center*, October 2014, 6.

⁴⁹ Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Tara Vassefi, "Perceptions of the 'Arab Spring' Within the Salafi-Jihadi Movement," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 35, no.12 (2012): 831-848.

⁵⁰ Khalid Mahmoud, "Libyan Militants Call on Derna Residents to Join ISIS," *Asharq Al-Awsat* <http://www.aawsat.net/2014/10/article55337286>.

⁵¹ Aaron Y. Zelin, "The Islamic State's First Colony in Libya," *The Washington Institute: Policy Watch* 2325, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/the-islamic-states-first-colony-in-libya>, October 10, 2014.

II. A HISTORICAL SURVEY

The rise and fall of Muammar Gaddafi is the context for the situation that Libya finds itself in today. This survey begins with Libya in the early 20th century, during Italian colonial rule, and concludes with the events immediately following the 17 February Revolution. The first section explores Libya under colonial rule, as a newly independent state, and ends with the September 1, 1969 coup that allowed Muammar Gaddafi to seize power. The second section covers the brief period between 1969 and 1977 that can be described as Gaddafi's contemplative period, where he slowly put into practice his theories of governance and codified these theories as *The Green Book*. The final section covers Libya as the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (SPLAJ) under Gaddafi and concludes with the February 17, 2011 revolution, offering a political, social, and economic perspective. This historical review identifies systemic institutional weaknesses and trends and helps explain the system of jamahiriya, and how the very system so strongly championed by Gaddafi led ironically to his demise.⁵²

A. FROM ITALIAN COLONIAL RULE TO GADDAFI'S COUP

The period beginning with Italian colonial rule through Gaddafi's coup is marked with political and institutional successes and failures. This period begins with Italian rule, is then followed by Libyan Independence and the establishment of a monarchy, and finally the coup which eventually led to Gaddafi coming to power. The decisions made prior to Gaddafi's rise to power, particularly the implementation of a dual court system and the west's involvement in Libya's security and economic affairs, fomented the foreign, economic, and domestic policy approaches Gaddafi would pursue for the subsequent four decades of rule.

52 Alia Brahimi, "Libya's Revolution," *The Journal of North African Studies* 16, no. 4 (2011): 605.

1. Italian Rule

Italy ruled over modern Libya from 1911–1942; however, at the time, there was no unified Libya, but three states: Cyrenaica, Fezzan, and Tripolitania (see Figure 1). The Italians incorporated a three-tiered judicial system. The lowest courts were peace councils, which were headed by tribal elders and resolved local disputes. The next level was the Islamic courts, which settled personal matters. The highest level of court was state administered and manned by an Italian judge. The courthouses were located where Italy had a presence—i.e., the cities had more state-administered courts because that was where most Italians were, whereas, the rural areas were dominated by local and Islamic law. This decision to have a mixed legal system consisting of sharia and statutory law effectively struck a balance in the transition from Ottoman to Italian rule; however, the existence of special tribunals for the defense of the state (STDSs) began a pattern of repression that would carry through to the Gaddhafi regime.⁵³



Figure 1. Map of the Three Libyan States⁵⁴

⁵³ “Trial by Error: Justice in Post-Qadhafi Libya,” International Crisis Group: Middle East/North Africa Report no. 140 (2013): 8.

⁵⁴ Red State Eclectic, accessed February 2, 2015, <http://redstateeclectic.typepad.com/a/6a00d83452719d69e2014e86db2d25970d-pi>

STDS were established to combat anticolonial resistance in an efficient manner. Military officers were given the authority to issue “on-the spot verdicts, mainly death sentences and forced deportation, with no right of appeal.”⁵⁵ This type of repression, where criticism of the ruling party was viewed as treason, is the same policy that Gaddhafi later implemented. In 1931, the courts wrongfully sentenced a man by the name of Umar al-Mukhatar to death and as a consequence produced a folk hero; his image is as iconic now as it was then.⁵⁶ Similarly, it was the repression of a journalist named Fathi Terbil that ignited the February 12, 2011 revolution.

The Italians were divisively defeated in Libya during World War II, and power was relinquished to the Allies. The British established the British Military Administration (BMA) to govern Cyrenaica and Tripolitania and provide control of strategic sea- and airports. The French gained control of Fezzan in the south, which complimented their existing interests in Chad, Niger, Tunisia, and Algeria. Finally, the United States established an air-force base near Tripoli, for the purposes of countering Soviet expansion.⁵⁷

2. Independence: United Kingdom of Libya

The trifecta of Western powers in Libya proposed the Bevin–Sforza Plan in May 1949, which called for a trusteeship lasting ten years; however, this plan was rejected by the UN, which pushed for Libyan independence. King Muhammad Idris al-Mahdi al-Sanusi, who led forces alongside the British against the Italians, was made the monarch of the United Kingdom of Libya on December 24, 1951. King Idris’s goals were to restore “societal forces that were crushed by occupation” and promote political “participation and representation” by all members of society in clubs, associations, and unions. In 1963, he approved women’s suffrage.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ “Trial by Error,” ICG, 8.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 8-9.

⁵⁷ Yehudit Ronen, “Britain’s Return to Libya: From the Battle of al-Alamein in the Western Libyan Desert to the Military Intervention in the ‘Arab Spring’ Upheaval,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 49, no. 5 (2013): 677.

⁵⁸ Zahra Langhi, “Gender and State-Building in Libya: Towards a Politics of Inclusion,” *The Journal of North African Studies* 19, no. 2 (2014): 201.

Idris had two tribal powerbases from which he drew legitimacy: the Sa'adi tribes in Cyrenaica and the Sufi-based Sanusiyyah tribes, who obtained their ideology from Sanusi's dynastic religious predecessors. The Sanusiyyah were located in the east, which centralized power for the monarchy in Cyrenaica. Despite the tribal support Idris acquired, it was not enough to force centralized state rule over the tribal infrastructure, and as a result the United Kingdom of Libya was not strongly cohesive, but a federalist system with Cyrenaica, Tripolitania, and Fezzan retaining significant autonomy.⁵⁹

Western focus on economic and security interests in the area did not subside after independence, but took a new direction. The new country suffered from a weak economy and relied heavily on foreign investment. In July 1953, Great Britain and the United Kingdom of Libya entered into the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance, which was written to last 20 years and allow the British to stage forces in Libya in return for protection from third parties.⁶⁰ France and the United States also took advantage of the opportunity to help the young country while securing their own national interests, both economic and counter-Soviet.

King Idris attempted to consolidate the religious courts with the state courts, but this effort was met with protest. The people demanded separate religious and state courts and the system reverted to the dual-court system. Though Libya had to import judges from neighboring countries (due to paucity of legal expertise), the period between 1952 and 1969 is still idealized for the judiciary's ability to be independent, effective, and fair.⁶¹ The trust that people had in the rule of law would change 180 degrees with the introduction of oil and Gaddafi.

A series of contextual events led to King Idris's isolation from the West. First, on October 25, 1961, Libya made its first oil shipment to the West, and as oil revenues increased, reliance on Western investment decreased.⁶² Another factor was neighboring Egypt, whose president, Gamal Abdel Nasser, espoused a pan-Arabic unity and was

⁵⁹ Brahimi, "Libya's Revolution," 611-612.

⁶⁰ Ronen, "Britain's Return to Libya," 678.

⁶¹ "Trial by Error," ICG, 10.

⁶² Ronen, "Britain's Return to Libya," 679.

gaining momentum throughout North Africa. The final reason was the Six-Day War between Israel and the United Arab Republic (Egypt). This left King Idris with the impossible choice of having a bad economy, a bad relationship with the West, or a bad relationship with the Islamists. Idris chose to cease oil exports to the West, and the British were kicked out of the country.⁶³

3. Gaddafi's Coup

Of the many tribes in Libya, the three primary are the Gadhadhfa (from Sebah and Sirte), the Warfalla (spread throughout the country), and the Merghara (in and around the Sebha region).⁶⁴ Coincidentally, Muammar Gaddafi was a member of the Gadhadhfa tribe; he was born in Sirte, raised in Sebah, and attended high school in Misrata. His early years created relationships with people who would become lifelong supporters from both Tripolitania and Fezzan, and in a regional context, events taking place in Egypt (the Suez Canal crisis and Nasser's call for a pan-Arabia) would inform young Gaddafi's worldview. Upon finishing high school, he attended a military academy in Benghazi and "his classmates from Sebha and Misrata joined him there, where they formed the nucleus of the Free Unionist Movement."⁶⁵

Since independence, King Idris had been able to develop critical infrastructure (such as schools and hospitals), protect his people, and form alliances with some of the most powerful countries in the world—all while heading one of the poorest nations in the world.⁶⁶ By 1969, the political context had changed and, to further exacerbate the deteriorating situation, Idris was eighty years old and removed from much of the decision making. On September 1, 1969, while the king was out of the country, the Free Unionist Movement executed a bloodless coup on the platform of "social justice, socialism, and

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Geoffrey Howard, "Libya's South: The Forgotten Frontier," *CTC Sentinel* 7, no. 11 (2013): 13.

⁶⁵ Mary-Jane Deeb, "Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya," in *The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa*, 6th ed., ed. David E. Long, Bernard Reich, and Mark Gasiorowski, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2011), 430.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 428.

unity.”⁶⁷ Muammar Gaddafi was appointed the leader of the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), a prominent, but not an executive, position in the new government. In December 1969, the Prime Minister (PM) and cabinet were accused of conspiring against the regime; they were subsequently removed from power and control of Libya shifted to the RCC and, more specifically, to Gaddafi.

Each predecessor of Gaddafi established fundamental principles for governing Libya. The Italians and the British had sufficient rule of law and functioning courts to allow Islamic and state courts to operate side by side. Idris understood the importance of Western foreign direct investment in Libyan markets and the importance of civil society as it pertains to representation, equality, and fairness. Gaddafi would soon forget the lessons learned by his predecessors.

B. SETTING THE STAGE FOR JAMAHIRRIYA (1969–1977)

Libya had never used a formal legal document to administer and govern the people. Thus, Article 37 of the 1969 temporary constitution specified that the new regime would write a constitution. Gaddafi rejected this idea, because he claimed that self-serving men create constitutions to be used as “the instrument of government...to control and manipulate the people.”⁶⁸ Instead he focused his efforts on emulating his neighbor to the east, Gamal Nasser.

1. The West Departs Libya

The new Arab Socialist Union, as it was called, was heavily influenced by the rise to power of Egyptian Gamal Nasser and his pan-Arabic nationalism. Gaddafi chose to use “heavy doses of fiery rhetoric” that poised him as the “defender of the weak against the strong, thriving on the idea of standing up to the West” and the principles of pan-Arabic nationalism.⁶⁹ This mentality would set the stage for the first years of power.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 429.

⁶⁸ Matteo Capasso, “Understanding Libya’s ‘Revolution’ through Transformation of the Jamahiriyya into a State of Exception,” *Middle East Critique* 22, no. 2 (2013): 117.

⁶⁹ “Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (V): Making Sense of Libya,” International Crisis Group: Middle East/North Africa Report no 107 (2011): 7.

Gaddafi's first order of business was to provide freedom, socialism, and unity—and the only way to achieve this was “to eradicate ‘all residual signs of Western colonialism’ and to liquidate Western military bases.”⁷⁰ The Western business presence and security-force presence were seen, at least at the outset, as mutually beneficial to both Libya and the West. Nevertheless, they were asked to leave Libya shortly after Gaddafi took power.

To Gaddafi's dismay, Libya needed the help of the West, particularly with the extraction of oil; Libya simply did not have the technology and skill to sustain its oil production, which provided “almost 99 percent of Libya's revenues and constituted all of its exports.”⁷¹ Libya allowed many Western oil companies to remain until late 1971, when it nationalized foreign equipment, adding to an already tense relationship between Gaddafi and the West. Gaddafi provided support to the Irish Republican Army and during the Arab–Israeli War enacted an oil embargo as a sign of protest. Finally, in an effort to sever any remaining ties with the West, he developed a relationship with the Soviet Union.

2. Judicial Reform

Rule of law is fundamental to any modern and legitimate society. Libya, both as a colony and an independent nation, had experimented with many forms of court system. Italian reliance on customary tribal or religious courts in the rural areas and state courts in urban areas had, for the most part, performed efficiently. However, Italian repression of the society through the STDS prevented the people from expressing frustrations without fear of persecution. King Idris, by contrast, attempted to consolidate sharia courts with the state courts, but met resistance, and soon afterwards, separated the courts once again. Gaddafi's moves to reform the court system reflected mistakes similar to those of his predecessors.

Context is important in understanding the first move of Gaddafi with regard to changing the judiciary. Following the September 1, 1968 coup, the courts continued to

⁷⁰ Ronen, “Britain's Return to Libya,” 680.

⁷¹ Ibid.

operate independently of the RCC, meaning they were impartial and not susceptible to coercion. The RCC went so far as to attempt to pass laws that restricted the ability of courts to adjudicate and make them more accountable to the government, but these attempts were unsuccessful. To gain more control over the courts, Gaddafi established “people’s courts,” also referred to as special courts. Special courts served a purpose similar to that of the STDS: to seek out and punish threats against the regime. The primary targets of these courts were former supporters of the monarchy, arrested for suspicion of enticing public unrest. In the end, over 200 people were prosecuted, some in absentia, and sentenced to death, including King Idris. These special courts lasted until the turn of the 21st century, but not without criticism for their tremendous reach into public discourse.⁷²

Religious courts were also subject to reform. Gaddafi’s personal views of Islam dictated how religious scholars could interpret the Quran. One of his most influential beliefs was that the *Sunna* (the words of the Prophet and his actions) were to be omitted from Islamic jurisprudence.⁷³ This is significant because most schools of Islamic jurisprudence rely on the Sunna to add context to Quranic verses. Gaddafi charged religious jurists with ensuring that state laws were in good keeping with sharia, then “downgraded the role of the *ulama* (religious scholars), making them consultants to the courts rather than allowing them to issue binding decisions on the application of Sharia.”⁷⁴ Finally, Gaddafi combined the two court systems (religious and state) into one state run court.

3. Political Reform

Two types of political structures—informal and formal—emerged following the September 1, 1969 coup. The informal structure consisted of a patronage network that included Gaddafi’s family, childhood friends who created the Free Officers Union, members of his tribe, and a cadre of ideologically aligned believers who were given

⁷² “Trial by Error,” ICG, 11-12.

⁷³ Brahimi, “Libya’s Revolution,” 615.

⁷⁴ “Popular Protest,” ICG, 6.

assignments to the revolutionary committees (RC).⁷⁵ These two groups were the core support of the Gaddafi regime, executing the limited governance that would be established and ensuring no challenges to power arose.

Libya's formal political structure under Gaddafi was based on the people's committees. Qaddafi's *Green Book*, a three-volume conceptualization of politics, economics, and universal truths, codifies Qaddafi's thoughts on labor, privatization, trade, and how the state must control all these.⁷⁶ Figure 2 is a diagram of the authority of the people, as seen by Gaddafi. In this direct democracy, the general public is responsible for holding a basic popular congress, which can be equated with a large town-hall meeting that reports directly to the cabinet.

⁷⁵ Brahimi, "Libya's Revolution," 607-608.

⁷⁶ Deeb, "Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya," 429.

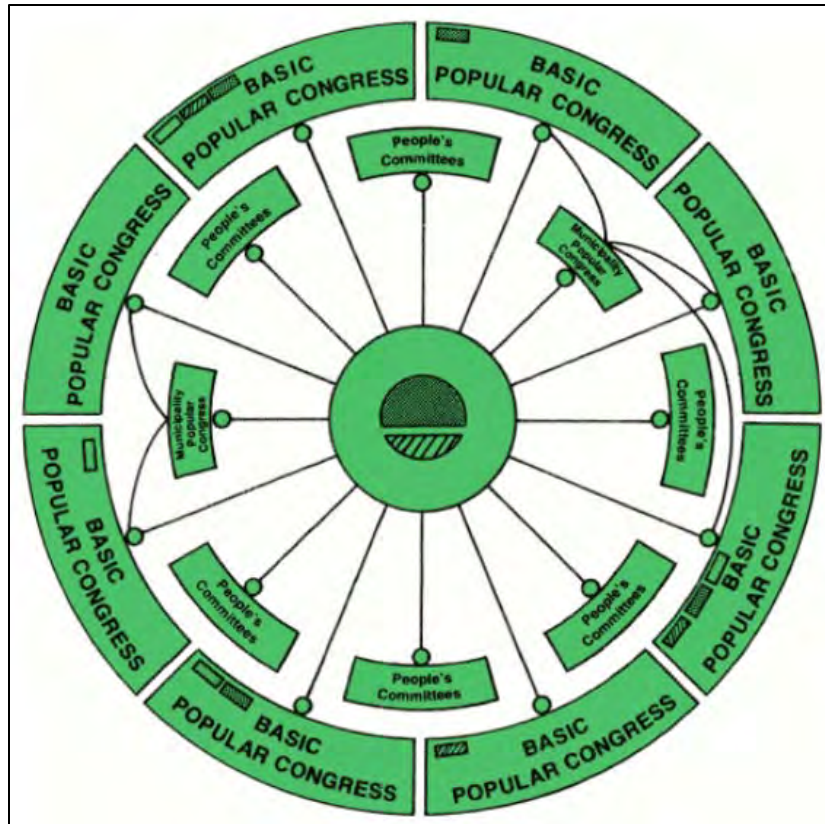


Figure 2. The Authority of the People⁷⁷

Gaddafi saw self-government as dangerous, and went so far as to outlaw political parties, dissidence, and even representation, because “the mere existence of a parliament means the absence of the people, but true democracy exists only through the participation of the people, not through the activity of their representatives.”⁷⁸ Notwithstanding the political apathy that such a philosophy enforces, Gaddafi called for mass participation by the people as they passed through each stage of the political process until the “will of the masses is implemented.”⁷⁹ Just as a parliament could not represent a people, a political party could not represent the masses, and they were therefore banned from participating in government. A 1972 law stipulated that “anyone involved in any group activity based

⁷⁷ “Direct Democracy: The secret of the Effectiveness of Peoples’ Resistance to Imperialism,” Libyan Free Press, <https://libyanfreepress.wordpress.com/2012/05/05/direct-democracy-the-secret-of-the-effectiveness-of-peoples-resistance-to-imperialism/>.

⁷⁸ Muammar Al Qadhafi, *The Green Book: Part One The Solution of the Problem of Democracy*, trans. Unknown (London, United Kingdom: Martin Brian and O’Keeffe, 1976), 9.

⁷⁹ Popular Protest,” ICG, 7.

on any ideology opposed to the principles of the revolution is liable to [be] executed for treason.”⁸⁰ Prohibiting political parties and denying the need for representation in parliament prevented any one person from ascending to challenge Gaddafi’s rule.

Another instance of Gaddafi’s preventing institutions from becoming too strong was in his outlook on security institutions. He believed that citizens could police themselves and refused to focus on professionalizing the military. He stated that any organization that believes it can administer the law is a police state or dictatorship, and that in a democracy the responsibility for “supervision should be carried out by the whole society.”⁸¹

Gaddafi’s *The Social Basis of the Third Universal Theory* pointedly states that “it is an undisputed fact that both man and woman are human beings...[and] are equal as human beings;” however, he continues to explain that the phrase “there is no difference in any way between men and women’ deprives women of her freedom.”⁸² He argues that for women to be truly free, certain jobs, positions, and educational levels must not be available, because it prevents them from performing their motherly duties. This is significant not only because it helps illustrate Gaddafi’s character and social perspective, but because women are at the forefront of protest in Libya today.

Muammar Gaddafi successfully reformed the judicial system and religious and political establishments in a few short years. By 1977, the Great Socialist People’s Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was officially established. Gaddafi’s patronage network and ideologues would come to serve him well in the next stages of Libyan history.

C. JAMAHIRIYA

Jamahiriya literally translates to “the state of the masses,” and what Muammar Gaddafi envisioned was a state in which every citizen had a voice, and that voice was heard. Unfortunately, what he espoused and the reality he imposed were two starkly

⁸⁰ “Popular Protest,” ICG, 7.

⁸¹ Qadhafi, *The Green Book:Part One*, 35.

⁸²*The Green Book Part Three: The Social Basis of the Third Universal Theory*, Accessed February 06, 2015. <http://www.mathabab.net/gci/theory/gb3.htm>.

different things. The people of Libya were not free to express their opinions and lived under repression, particularly if they could be perceived as anti-Gaddafi. The socialist institutions that were meant to provide goods and services to the population were intentionally suppressed or mismanaged to ensure no one sector of government became too powerful. This oil-rich country, with a small population, could not provide jobs for the majority of its population, which provokes the question, why not? The answer is that he continued the practices of the previous eight years (1969–1977) by filling key governmental positions with loyalists and ideologues, subverting key institutions like the judiciary, and alienating potential international and domestic allies such as the West, religious elements, and non-Arabs.

In this section, the SPLAJ will be examined on the political, economic, and social fronts. The government's inability to address key issues throughout Gaddafi's tenure is discussed, including international relations and domestic, religious-based conflict. The period covered is approximately 1977 (the establishment of the SPLAJ) to February 17, 2011 (the beginning of the revolution).

1. Political Front

Early in the revolution, the international scene played a significant role in the shape that Libyan international politics would take. As was mentioned, Egyptian president Gamal Nasser was an inspiration to Gaddafi, particularly his pan-Arabic approach to regional politics. Despite his affinity for the Egyptian president, however, following the Arab–Israeli War, Gaddafi removed himself from Nasser's sphere of influence. Libya found a regional ally in Tunisia and at times was able to work well with Chad and Algeria. Meanwhile, Gaddafi's alienation from the West and embracement of the Soviets increased tensions. Gaddafi allowed the Soviet Union to emplace radars along the Egyptian border. This increased friction between the two states and resulted in an air campaign by Egypt to prevent the surveillance of Egyptian bases. The relationship between Egypt and Libya continued to ebb and flow for some time.⁸³

⁸³ Deeb, "Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya," 440-441.

The first significant coup attempt against Gaddafi's new regime occurred in 1975, by Islamists, and subsequently dozens more were attempted; but each time they were suppressed because of Gaddafi's ability to maneuver "between the three institutions in Libya that made up the basis of his support: the Libyan army, the General People's Congress and the revolutionary committees."⁸⁴ Colonel Gaddafi was an expert manipulator of these institutions, as well as of the judiciary and the international community. Impressively, he remained in power for four decades, though he technically held no official position in government.

In 1978, Gaddafi resigned from political office and became Libya's ideological guide, although in practice he was indeed the head of state. He named himself "Brother Leader" and sought to "portray himself...as a [strategic] thinker" and a Bedouin embodying the "traditions of honour and courage" for the sake of the struggling masses.⁸⁵ The system of *jamahiriya* attempted to obviate the bureaucracy by empowering the citizenry; however, it created a myriad of congresses and committees, which allowed Gaddafi to "maintain a sense of orchestrated chaos...to ensure that no one institution can become too powerful" and furthermore to ensure that no one person or intuition was ever held accountable.⁸⁶ This lack of accountability permitted him to shift blame to the masses, the intuitions, or the state, as desired. A good example of this chaos in action is seen in the implementation of security forces.

a. Libyan Security Institutions

Gaddafi posits in his first *Green Book* that "'Society is its own supervisor.' Any pretension by any individual or group that it is responsible for law is dictatorship. Democracy means the responsibility of the whole society, and supervision should be carried out by the whole society."⁸⁷ In other these words, he placed the onus of security on the people—a public good that nearly every nation understands in its social contract as

⁸⁴ Francois Burgat, "Gadhafi's Ideological Framework," in *Qadhafi's Libya: 1969 to 1994*, ed. Dirk Vandewalle, (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 60.

⁸⁵ "Popular Protest," ICG, 8.

⁸⁶ Capasso, "Understanding Libya's 'Revolution'," 118-119.

⁸⁷ Qadhafi, *The Green Book: Part One*, 35.

the responsibility of the state. Gaddafi flipped the social contract around, and in empowering the population, preempted potential challenges to power by weakening the security forces. Gaddafi did not trust the officer corps and “frequently re-shuffled its leadership” to keep it weak, turning to “a network of overlapping militias” from the Gadhadhfa, Warfalla, and Magharha tribes to perform security duties.⁸⁸

The actual military suffered from poor professionalization, outdated or ill-maintained equipment, and overall lack of leadership. Positions within the military were not only shuffled around to the extent that service members did not know their bosses and supervisors did not know their subordinates, but were assigned based on tribal and personal affiliations with Brother Leader. Following the 1993 coup attempt by a combination of Islamists and military members, Gaddafi ensured that no promotions would be made beyond his own “rank” of colonel. The problems surrounding the police forces were similar to those of the armed forces: lack of discipline, equipment, and training. Aside from Gaddafi’s personal revolutionary-guard force, the police and armed forces were primarily used to achieve political goals, not to secure the territory and the citizens. The use of the military to further political aspirations is a characteristic that carried over into the 17 February revolution.⁸⁹

b. Libyan Revolutionary Committees

The revolutionary committees served as an “ideological vanguard of the masses, whose function concerned the conscientization of the population.”⁹⁰ The RCs emerged as a result of apathy among the population, and more specifically for one of two reasons: 1) lack of participation within the people’s committees or 2) to prevent tribal elders from advocating solely for their tribe’s interests. Initially, the RCs were not created to exert authority; however, as time went on, they could possess a considerable amount of authority. Furthermore, since Libya did not have a constitution (due to Gaddafi’s

⁸⁸ Brahimi, “Libya’s Revolution,” 614.

⁸⁹ Florence Gaub, “A Libyan Recipe for Disaster,” *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 56, no. 1 (2014): 104-105.

⁹⁰ Capasso, “Understanding Libya’s ‘Revolution’,” 116.

abhorrence of man-made laws) the roles, responsibilities, and authorities of the RCs were never officially defined.⁹¹

As RCs became more prominent, so too did their powers. First, the leaders within the RCs were typically ideologues or staunch supporters of Gaddafi, earning them Gaddafi's trust. These ideologues were positioned perfectly to derive maximal benefit from a convoluted economic system, where they were able to profit immensely from reselling subsidized goods. Loyalty and wealth allowed them to ensure that revolutionary ideals were spread throughout Libya. The RCs authorized assassinations between 1980 and 1987. The killings first targeted Islamists (violent and nonviolent), then Libyans living abroad in countries such as Italy, Germany, and England. All were seen, in the broadest sense of the term, as enemies of the revolution. This became a pivotal point, at which the formal system of congresses and committees and the informal system of the RCs competed for authority. The RCs became so powerful that they could block decisions made by the formal systems (in the name of the masses) and still "control schools, universities, factories, media and especially the army and the police."⁹² The RCs also worked closely with judicial institutions.⁹³

c. The Judiciary

The judiciary underwent several changes and additions throughout Libya's history. Gaining momentum in the early 1980s, RCs were authorized to arrest enemies of the state and manage detention facilities. Judges were appointed without any legal training and internal services could keep prisoners in jail after their sentence was served. This trifecta of the RCs, internal services, and an untrained judiciary system created a type of police state resembling the Italian STDS—even military courts were brought in and to preside over civil disputes. The shift from independent courts to bodies responsible to Gaddafi's internal service exacerbated the corruption within the system. Judges

⁹¹ Capasso, "Understanding Libya's 'Revolution,'" 116-117.

⁹² Ibid., 117-118.

⁹³ Ibid.

admitted to taking bribes and quid-pro-quo deals and performing arbitrary court proceedings—the corruption did not depart greatly from the people’s court system.⁹⁴

2. Economic Front

Looking from a purely economic standpoint, one might conclude that Libya has the potential of being very successful. It is rich in oil and natural gas, has a relatively small population, and is centrally located, with access to waterways, the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe. But despite all this, Libya has never been economically well off. This phenomenon is referred to as Dutch disease (or more commonly as the resource curse), and occurs when corrupt regimes choose not to reinvest in infrastructure, education, and other public goods, but rather spend their earnings on developing patronage networks to preserve power.⁹⁵ Since the establishment of jamahiriya, Libya’s economy has ebbed and flowed, but one constant has remained: central in (or, at a minimum, implicit in) every protest is the mismanagement of Libya’s economy and resources. Figure 3 shows the major natural resources in Libya and how the population densities tend surround those resources.

⁹⁴ “Trial by Error,” ICG, 11-15.

⁹⁵ Terra Lawson-Remer and Joshua Greenstein, “Beating the Resource Curse in Africa: A Global Effort,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, August 2012, <http://www.cfr.org/africa-sub-saharan/beating-resource-curse-africa-global-effort/p28780>.

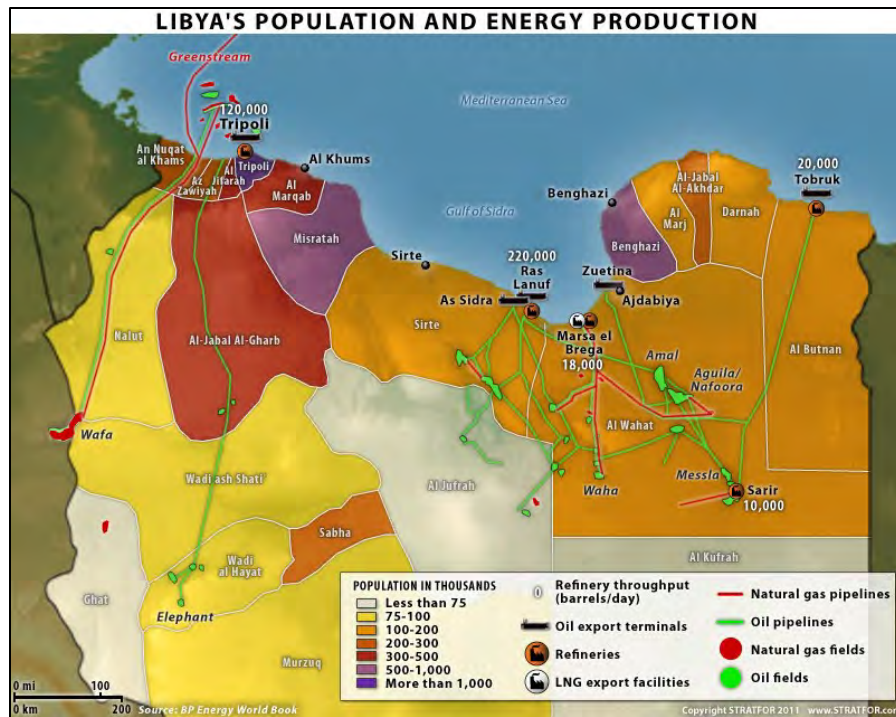


Figure 3. Libya's Population and Energy Production⁹⁶

a. *Economics in Action*

A sharp decline in oil revenues, coupled with ideological differences, was the precursor to the first coup attempt against Gaddafi in 1975. In 1977, 22 officers involved in the attempted coup were purged as Gaddafi withdrew his association with the remaining Free Officers Union in exchange for a more exclusive group: the “men of the tent.”⁹⁷ Driven ideologically by common domestic and foreign policies, the men of the tent were equally driven to control the flow of money throughout Libya. Their model was simple: focus on the short term to “buy off the population” and make the regime the sole source of income.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ “Libya’s Population and Energy Production,” China.org.cn., last modified, March 22, 2011, http://china.org.cn/world/2011-03/22/content_22197846.htm.

⁹⁷ George Joffe, “Civil Activism and the Roots of the 2011 Uprisings,” in *The 2011 Libyan Uprisings and the Struggle for the Post-Qadhafi Future*, ed. Jason Pack, (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), 24.

⁹⁸ Brahimi, “Libya’s Revolution,” 608.

The pursuit of an egalitarian society was, to an extent, successful. Under Gaddafi's socialist paradigm, wealth was shared equally and control of large industries and businesses was transferred over to the people's committees.⁹⁹ The banking and oil industries were nationalized, forcing foreign ventures to hand over their assets or return home. The guiding principle was that "only the needy can be exploited, [therefore,] need itself should be abolished," which created the domestic policy of "the abolition of need."¹⁰⁰ This policy was egalitarian by design, and "by the late 1970s virtually no Libyan wanted for housing, medical care, or transportation."¹⁰¹ However, Gaddafi would discover that his version of utopia was unsustainable.

By 1984, the entire market became centralized (though nominally under popular control) under "a profoundly intolerant, autocratic, and proto-fascist corporate system which exercised its hegemony over the economy."¹⁰² As much as the government wanted to exert control over business, specifically the oil business, it simply did not have the expertise to truly manage the market, but rather, was forced to react to it. Much of the Libyan economic elite saw the writing on the wall and left for Europe, which placed Libya's economic policies in the hands of very few capable economists, plus Gaddafi himself.

Sanctions also played a part in Libya's economic misfortunes. Numerous international sanctions were placed on Libya, which resulted in consequences ranging from political isolation to dips in oil prices and the valuation of currency. As yet another short-term response, the government offered subsidies and housing to appease popular grievances. Despite this sop, opponents of the regime still emerged, typically from the east (Cyrenaica), which led the jamahiriya to passively target the east by ensuring it remained underdeveloped.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ Popular Protest," ICG, 8.

¹⁰⁰ Lisa Anderson, "Qadhafi's Legacy: An Evaluation of a Political Experiment," in *Qadhafi's Libya: 1969 to 1994*, ed. Dirk Vandewalle, (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 225-226.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Joffe, "Civil Activism," 24-25.

¹⁰³ Brahimi, "Libya's Revolution," 617.

b. Sanctions

Almost immediately after the September 1st revolution, Gaddafi began his ideological vendetta against the West. By kicking out the British, Americans, and French from their military bases in Libya, nationalizing foreign oil exploration and refinement assets, and allying with the Soviet Union, Gaddafi made his stance against the West clear and himself a target of diplomatic pressure—in particular, sanctions.

Performed properly, sanctions can cause belligerents to change their ways. This is precisely what happened in Libya after 1979, when the United States imposed unilateral sanctions. Unilateral sanctions are typically unsuccessful; however, these coincided with a Libyan recession, due to a fall in oil prices and oil demand, as well as a poor attempt to nationalize the oil industry; the United States exacerbated these problems by prohibiting the import of Libyan oil and the export of oil-refinement machinery and eventually removing U.S. oil companies from Libya.¹⁰⁴ An UN-levied sanction in 1992 caused even more economic fallout, and as a result “virtually every Libyan family found itself involved in the black market” and the Libyan government was cornered into making concessions.¹⁰⁵

Gaddafi’s domestic economic policy relied heavily on subsidies for nearly every public good, from social services to medical care. Not only were public goods subsidized, but so too were everyday commodities such as food, oil, and fuel. This meant that the average Libyan could get these products for a significantly lower price than their counterparts could obtain in a neighboring country, encouraging black-market sales. The combination of a population involved in black-market trading, coupled with subsidies for high-demand goods still guaranteed “that Libya’s porous borders remain[ed] a contested site for competing smuggling networks.”¹⁰⁶

The successful implementation of sanctions, particularly the UN sanctions, played a significant role in the outcome of two major international standoffs between Libya and

¹⁰⁴ Ronald Bruce St. John, “The Post-Qadhafi Economy,” in *The 2011 Libyan Uprisings and the Struggle for the Post-Qadhafi Future*, ed. Jason Pack, (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), 88.

¹⁰⁵ Brahimi, “Libya’s Revolution,” 609.

¹⁰⁶ St. John, “The Post-Qadhafi Economy,” 94-95.

the West. The first was in reference to the extradition of suspected terrorists responsible for the Lockerbie bombing. The second resulted in an agreement on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The colonel was caught in a lose-lose situation. He could not extradite the Lockerbie suspects because they were from major tribes, which would have threatened his power base; but “simultaneously, the socioeconomic and political malaise in the country empowered the Islamist opposition movement which called for a *jihad* against Qaddafi’s regime.”¹⁰⁷ The Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) was gaining momentum in the 1990s, and perhaps Gaddafi saw this as the greater of two evils. This would explain his eventual cooperation with the West in regard to the extradition of the terror suspects. In Gaddafi’s later years, he became desperate to rebuild his economy, even if it meant working with the West. This led him to give up his nuclear-arms program in exchange for the lifting of sanctions. Perhaps the biggest effect of these sanctions was that Gaddafi had to begin seeking international recognition.¹⁰⁸

c. Revenue Sources

One of Libya’s main sources of revenue is its oil. Libya ranks in the top ten countries in the world for proven oil reserves. Of note, 80 percent of its reserves are located in Sirte. In the late 1960s, Libyan oil production peaked at approximately three million barrels a day. That number suffered significantly in the 1980s and 1990s as a result of sanctions and the exodus of oil expertise and business elites. With the turn of the century and better international relations, oil production began to rise again. Similarly, Libya’s natural gas exports (ranked in the top five in Africa) have declined in recent years.¹⁰⁹

Given the oil reserves in Libya and “a population of a mere six million, many Libyans believe their country ought to resemble Dubai.”¹¹⁰ The difference between other Gulf states and Libya is that Libya did not have an oil boom per se. Gaddafi wanted to

¹⁰⁷ Ronen, “Britain’s Return to Libya,” 684.

¹⁰⁸ Capasso, “Understanding Libya’s ‘Revolution’,” 121.

¹⁰⁹ “Country Analysis Brief: Libya,” US Energy Information Administration, last modified, November 25, 2014, 2-9. <http://www.eia.gov/countries/cab.cfm?fips=ly>.

¹¹⁰ “Popular Protest,” ICG, 2.

shield the population and institutions from the impacts of oil. He therefore provided the citizenry with the public goods they needed at no cost or subsidized cost. Furthermore, he fought modernization from external influences, specifically “‘disruptive’ foreign technological and societal influences from impinging on the traditional framework of Libyan society.”¹¹¹

Most of the industry created centered on support systems for petroleum and natural-gas exploration; however, in the early 1980s, Libya expanded into other industries, generally based on geography. For example, Misrata became the center of the steel industry; Wadi Shatti (southern Tripolitania) focused on its iron deposits; Abu Kammash (near Tunisia) developed a chemical-fertilizer industry; and Ras al-Unuf (located at the end of the Sirte pipelines) manufactured petrochemicals. By 1985 these cities “would act as regional centers for future industrial development.”¹¹²

Libya has always struggled in the agricultural sector. About 20 percent of the population was farmers. Water was scarce, and the government imported about 50 percent of the food. The limited fertile soil was at risk because salt water was beginning to contaminate freshwater coastal aquifers. Gaddafi had either to settle the farmers closer to freshwater sources buried deep underground in the desert or develop an elaborate pipeline to bring fresh water to the farmers. Gaddafi initially tried the former, but eventually put his faith in the latter, and in 1983 Libya officially began the “great man-made river project.” The project came at a time of economic peril for Libya and the actual execution of the construction was contrary to Gaddafi’s economic philosophy. It was completely run by foreign consultants and technology and required every Libyan to pay the equivalent of two months’ salary.¹¹³

The project was a tremendous endeavor; at times Gaddafi referred to it as the eighth wonder of the world. Despite receiving criticism by skeptics it had positive

¹¹¹ Youssef Mohammed Sawani, “Dynamics of Continuity and Change,” in *The 2011 Libyan Uprisings and the Struggle for the Post-Qadhafi Future*, ed. Jason Pack, (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 62.

¹¹² Dirk Vandewalle, “The Libyan Jamahiriyya Since 1969,” in *Qadhafi’s Libya: 1969 to 1994*, ed. Dirk Vandewalle, (New York, NY: St. Martin’s Press, 1995), 29.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 29-31.

impacts. By mid-2000, the government had completed phases one to three of the project (see Figure 4). This meant that the fresh water from the deserts was now transported to Benghazi (phase one) and to Tripoli (phase two) and a pipeline connected the two cities (phase three). Libyan workers slowly, but surely, replaced foreign contractors as they gained expertise. Jobs in manufacturing pipelines became available and, most importantly, the populated areas of Libya now received abundant fresh water. Gaddafi envisioned the project as a model that other African nations could emulate to boost their economies, attract investment, and provide water to needy populations.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴John Watkins, “Libya’s Thirst for ‘Fossil Water,’” BBC News, March 18, 2006, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/4814988.stm>.

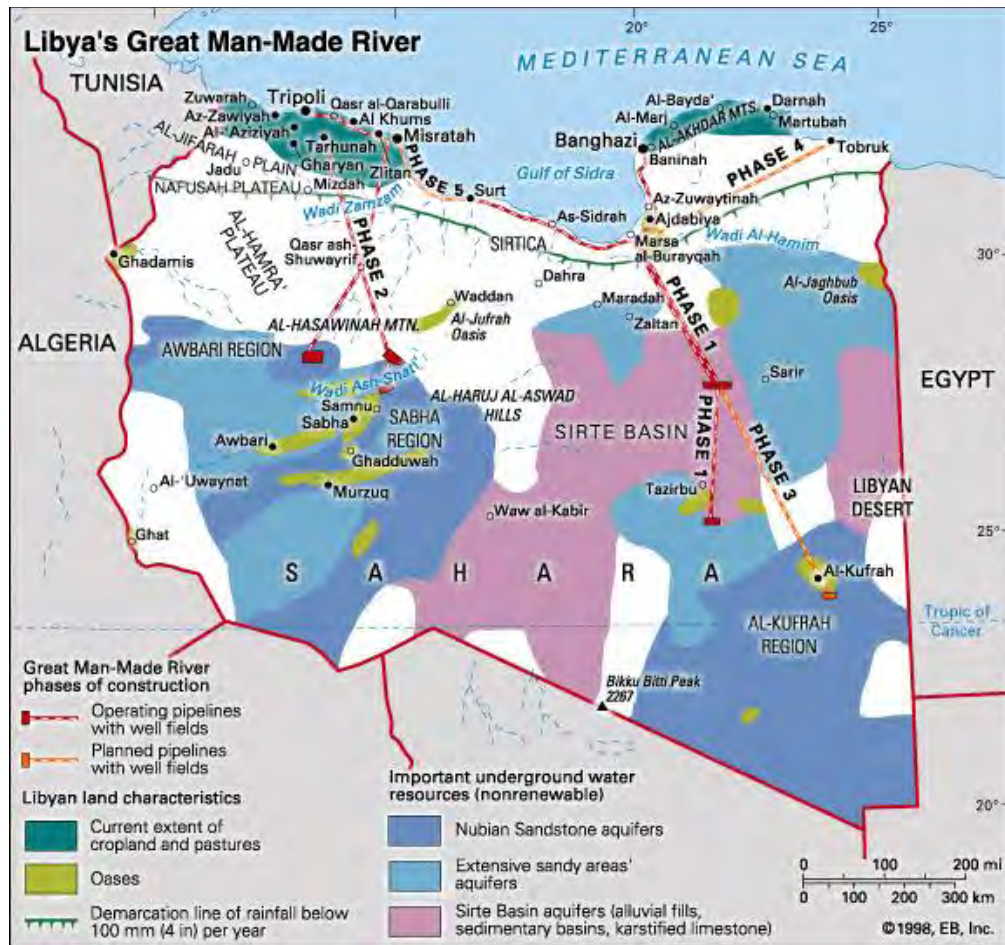


Figure 4. Libya's Great Man-Made River Project¹¹⁵

3. Social Front

The philosophy of Jamahiriya impacted the day to day interaction of the Libyan people. Familial and tribal groups were given a level of autonomy to govern themselves, and through a system of patronage, provided their allegiance back to Gaddafi. Certain segments of society were ostracized, like the Islamists, and were either repressed into submission or forced to operate in secret. The following sections will focus on highlighting the impact Gaddafi had on certain segments of society as well as the domestic impacts on civil society.

¹¹⁵ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. "Great Man-Made River (GMR)," accessed February 3, 2015, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/243446/Great-Man-Made-River-GMR>.

a. Libyan Tribes

Libya has been a very tribally based country since well before independence. The three main ethnicities (Arab/Berber, Tuareg, and Toubou) can be easily seen in Figure 5, and hundreds of subtribes and clans exist under the three main ethnicities. When hit with times of economic hardship “Libyans simply withdrew to these familial and tribal institutions,” and COL Gaddafi made a point in the second volume of the *Green Book* that loyalties are strongest and should be encouraged at the family, clan, and tribal level and that the loyalty slowly dissipates as they reach regional and state levels.¹¹⁶ These communities are what provided society with protection, rule of law, and other public goods that would typically be provided by the state. Conservative estimates suggest that over 140 tribes and clans exist in Libya, however, according to Dr. Faraj Abdulaziz Najm (Libyan Social Scientist and Historian) no more than 30 tribes and clans have influence on decision making in the country.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Vandewalle, “Libyan Jamahiriyya Since 1969,” 34.

¹¹⁷ Abdulsattar Hatitah and Asharq Al-Awsat, “Libyan Tribal Map: Network of Loyalties that will Determine Gaddafi’s Fate,” CETRI, last modified February 24, 2011, <http://www.cetri.be/spip.php?article2102&lang=en>.

Of the three ethnicities, the Arab and Berbers are largest in population. Prominent tribes, from east to west, are the Zintan Warfallah, Bani Walid, and Misrata (see Figure 5). Located further south, near the town of Sabha, are the pro-Gaddafi tribes of Magariha and Gaddafi. Colonel Gaddafi co-opted three main tribes: “his own (the Gaddafi) and the allied Maqariha (whom he married into) and Warfalla (the country’s largest),” to whom Gaddafi granted prominent positions in the military, policy and intelligence services.¹²⁰ By no means is Figure 5 an all-inclusive list of significant tribes, but rather, an attempt to highlight the tribes and areas that played an important role in the recent history of Libya and a significant role in the 17 February revolution and its aftermath.

The Toubou and the Tuareg are minorities who inhabit the sparsely populated and vast southern regions of Libya. The Tuareg population spans several North African states: generally the border regions of Libya, Niger, Algeria, and Mali. The Toubou, on the other hand, are concentrated in Libya, Chad, and Niger. Their relationship with Gaddafi was similar in the sense that both tribes were disenfranchised politically and socioeconomically and were tools for foreign policy. For example, Gaddafi made claim to resources in northern Chad by virtue of the Toubou population’s integrated status within Libya. He was also a supporter of the Toubou separatist movement in Chad, the National Liberation Front. The Tuareg were hired by Gaddafi as security forces, but more importantly he used his relationship to posture himself as a regional power by arbitrating disputes between the Tuaregs, Niger, and Mali. Unofficially, the Toubou and Tuareg profited greatly from the black market. Their transnational affiliations allow them to move easily any subsidized goods, such as food and oil, or illicit goods, such as weapons and narcotics, with relative ease.¹²¹

Despite the powerful influence of the tribes, Gaddafi was able to implement strong policies that had substantial effects in civil society and religion. Although not all his policies were negative, many had less-than-positive consequences, and they were created for the primary purpose of keeping the population in line and Gaddafi in power.

¹²⁰ “Understanding Libya,” *Fragile States*.

¹²¹ Henry Smith, “The South,” *The 2011 Libyan Uprisings and the Struggle for the Post-Qadhafi Future*, ed. Jason Pack, (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), 179-185.

b. Civil Society and Religion

Civil society in Libya under Gaddafi was progressive as compared to other Arab nations, particularly for women. For example, women in Libya have been afforded many liberties and have held prominent positions, such as judges, since 1975. Personal-status laws were also favorable towards women, who had the right to divorce and approval authority in polygamy. Women played a crucial role in mobilizing and leading the initial protests of the 17 February revolution.¹²²

Education also grew by leaps and bounds during the 40-plus years of Gaddafi's tenure. This can be attributed partly to urbanization and partly to policy. In 1975, Libya had only two universities, but by 2004, that number had grown to nine, with an additional 84 vocational-training centers. Students studying abroad in Western universities found themselves victims of political tempests— particularly in the mid-1980s—but by the time diplomatic relations were restored in the 2000s, Libyan students were again studying in Western universities, in numbers circling 10,000. These educated elites provided the professional forces for Libya; but having been exposed to other political possibilities that existed throughout the world, they would return to create another segment of the population willing to protest the regime.¹²³

The hardship in Libya that came from Gaddafi's isolationist policies and Western sanctions had ripple effects throughout society. By 1987, "consumer shortages and bread lines had become common features in most Libyan cities," forcing families to hold multiple jobs.¹²⁴ Because families had to work harder, performance slipped as work was not being accomplished properly. Schools saw a noticeable drop in student quality and hospitals lacked maintenance.¹²⁵

Shortly after establishing the SPLAJ, Gaddafi took over the media, but he did not stop there. He started a policy of collective punishment when tribes fell out of line, and

¹²² Langhi, "Gender and State-Building," 201.

¹²³ Joffe, "Civil Activism," 32-33.

¹²⁴ Vandewalle, "Libyan Jamahiriyya Since 1969," 33.

¹²⁵ Capasso, "Understanding Libya's 'Revolution'," 122.

often had to resort to using force. He showed how disconnected from the people he was in 1999, when he made himself the “‘African King of Kings’, [and] championed Pan-Africanism and African Unity” while Libyans were rioting against black-African immigrants in Libya.¹²⁶ Black Africans found themselves the “victims of episodes of racism and xenophobia in Libya,” and this led to the African Awakening and the massacres of 2000,¹²⁷ which serve as strong indicators of the civil frustrations growing in Libya.

Gaddafi was known to be heavy handed towards Islamists. His reforms to the Islamic courts prompted the growth of an Islamist challenge to his authority. The Ikhwan sought a “pan-Islamic as opposed to –Arab[,].... sharia-based as opposed to socialist, divinely sanctioned as opposed to populist” rule over Libya.¹²⁸ The group was successfully repressed, and from that point forward, every Islamist group was referred to as Ikhwan. Gaddafi was ruthless when targeting Islamists and even held public and televised hangings. Repression in the 1980s and 1990s served as a prequel to the establishment of the LIFG. Gaddafi captured the essence of his repression with this appeal to the Libyan citizens: “If you know anyone who is one of those heretics [Islamists] then he should be killed and liquidated just like a dog. Without trial. Do not be afraid. Nobody will arrest you or put you on trial if you kill a heretic.”¹²⁹ Gaddafi simply perpetuated a system of repression against Islamists, impunity for the use of informal power, and a system of chaos.

¹²⁶ Brahimi, “Libya’s Revolution,” 608-610.

¹²⁷ Capasso, “Understanding Libya’s ‘Revolution’,” 125.

¹²⁸ Brahimi, “Libya’s Revolution,” 615.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 616.

D. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Before independence, Libya served a geopolitical purpose under Italian and British rule. Oil had not yet been discovered, so the revenue brought in by foreign occupation was, to a small extent, needed. The Italians made two decisions of significance with regard to rule of law: first, to have a mixed judicial system whereby rural areas were adjudicated according to tribal or Islamic courts and urban areas had state-run tribunals supplemented by sharia courts for civil matters. The dual-court system worked fairly well and was resistant to corruption. The second decision by the Italians had negative consequences for the development of Libya—namely, the establishment of STDS tribunals to repress and intimidate potential subversive activity. Throughout Libya's evolution, the dual-court system and the courts used as instruments for repression were regularly revisited.

The brief period of British control opened the doors for Western involvement and investment in Libya. Between France, the United States, and the UK, the main interest was ensuring that staging bases in Libya were sufficient to repel or deter Soviet aggression. Once Libya gained its independence, in December 1951, King Idris made a pact allowing Western forces to stay in Libya. The king attempted to turn the judiciary into a single state-court system, but under heavy protest, reverted back to the dual system—yet another instance of the people demanding a semblance of Islamic law in daily life. Both the height and the downfall of Idris's reign can be marked by the first shipment of oil on October 1961. A slow increase in economic pseudo-independence, coupled with pan-Arabic nationalism, gave voice to Islamists and revolutionaries and eventually forced the king to sever relations with the West.

Riding the waves of pan-Arabism, economic prosperity, and independence from foreign influence, the Free Unionist Movement seized control of Libya in a bloodless coup on 01 September 1969. The years between the coup and 1977, when Gaddafi officially established the jamahiriya, constitute his formative years. He wrote two of his three green-book volumes, combined the dual court system, removing the religious interpretation aspect of sharia, created a special court designed for repression, removed Western influence, and nationalized foreign assets, particularly in the oil industry. His

actions against the West and alliance with the Soviet Union would set him on a path of regular contention with the West.

Gaddafi's vision of institutional development employed two opposing forces. On one hand, he wanted to transform "Libya into a bastion for his regional ambitions" of pan-Arabism, and on the other, "Qadhafi's concerns for security and dominance" prevented the establishment of any institutions with true power, authority, or influence.¹³⁰ This weakened political/military, economic, and social institutions. His policy of abolition of need, which worked during good times, meant that when economic hardship struck, the entire country suffered. By 1985, Libya had a very contentious relationship with the United States and UK, and by 1992, was placed under sanctions by the UN. The relationships remained tense until 2005, with the normalization of relations following Gaddafi's 2002 announcement that he would to cease production of weapons of mass destruction.

Gaddafi's children owned the telecommunications, construction, maritime transport (they had been granted control of the oil and natural gas trade), and a diverse conglomerate called the One Nine Group showing the depth of nepotism that existed within the Gaddafi family, and causing Libyans to work "outside of the official framework in order to get anything done."¹³¹ At the same time, Saif Al-Islam (one of Gaddafi's children) worked closely with reform-minded Libyans, perhaps out of genuine concern, but turned hawkish and anti-reform when the February 17, 2011 revolution began fomenting.¹³² The people did not have a voice in the Gaddafi family.

The revolution started on January 28, 2011, when, in reaction to the Tunisian revolution and domestic unrest, Gaddafi told Libyan youth "to take what was rightfully theirs"—which youth took as an invitation to occupy housing projects across the country.¹³³ Next, on the heels of the Egyptian revolution, Libyans living abroad primed a

¹³⁰ Omar I. El Fathaly and Monte Palmer, "Institutional Development in Qadhafi's Libya," in *Qadhafi's Libya: 1969 to 1994*, ed Dirk Vandewalle, (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 175.

¹³¹ Alison Pargeter, "Libya: Reforming the Impossible?" *Review of African Political Economy* 33, no. 108 (2007): 232.

¹³² "Popular Protest," ICG, 4.

¹³³ *Ibid*, 2.

revolutionary fervor through online postings on February 14. On February 15, Fathi Terbil (a human-rights lawyer) was arrested in Benghazi. A February 17 protest on the anniversary of the Danish cartoons of Mohammed in 2006 turned into clashes between protesters and security forces, resulting in ten demonstrators killed. The arrest of Terbil had little to do with the protests or Egypt, but symbolically it made no difference. The government had expected unrest in Tripoli or Bani Walid, not in Benghazi. The revolution had started.¹³⁴

¹³⁴ “Popular Protest,” ICG, 2-3.

III. A CONTEMPORARY STUDY

On the heels of Tunisian and Egyptian unrest, it is not difficult to imagine Gaddafi's fear of possible revolution—never mind his natural state of hypersensitivity to any form of discontent. What started as an annual protest against a Danish cartoon quickly snowballed into revolution. The emotions of 40-plus years of repression came to the foreground, and nothing could be done to slow it down.

1. Political

In reaction to the initial days of protest, Gaddafi's security forces defaulted to the strategy of repression. As Libyan diplomat Ahmed Jibril recalls, on the first day of protests in Al Bayda (between Derna and Benghazi) 300 people showed up, two were killed, and 5,000 attended the funeral; when 15 people were killed, 50,000 people showed up; "the more Qaddafi kills people, the more people go into the street."¹³⁵ Gaddafi's policies left him with no other option than to repress. His ideology contended that power belonged the people, and he held no formal position in government, so they were absurdly assumed to be protesting against themselves; it was also practical to repress dissent, because institutional change occurred slowly, which left no room for quick reform.¹³⁶

Demonstrators in Tripoli and Benghazi protested "deteriorating economic conditions and the limited job opportunities for recent graduates as well as the attacks on religious leaders and intuitions."¹³⁷ In Tripoli, protestors symbolically burned the congress building as a display of how much they thought the People's Congress represented the population. Gaddafi resorted again to tactics he used against LIFG in the 1990s. He called the protestors "cockroaches," suggested they were drugged by AQ, and

¹³⁵ "Popular Protest," ICG, 5.

¹³⁶ Brahimi, "Libya's Revolution," 610-611.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 615.

as he had before, told his followers to don green armbands and seek and destroy the rebels.¹³⁸

The National Transitional Council (NTC) was established only ten days after the revolution began and served as a rallying center for the revolutionaries. The NTC “included 31 representatives from Libya’s towns and cities and was said to operate by consensus...The council’s leadership was composed largely of a combination of former political prisoners, reformists technocrats and regime officials who had defected to the rebels.”¹³⁹ Unfortunately, four decades of jamahiriya political culture was ingrained in the new leaders’ psyche—the new interim government suffered the same problems of weak parties, committees of the masses, and lack of hierarchy in decision making.¹⁴⁰

With increased rebel success, Gaddafi intensified his attacks on the population. As a result, the UN passed Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1973, establishing a no-fly zone over Libya, and NATO initiated assistance on the ground to the rebel forces.¹⁴¹ As the fighting began to culminate in September and October of 2011, the NTC unearthed several mass graves in Tripoli, confirming Gaddafi’s role in targeting the population. In October, Gaddafi was killed, ending an eight-month revolution. The NTC vowed to hold elections eight months after the end of fighting, and in August 2012, the General National Congress (GNC) took control of the government.¹⁴²

The two main parties in the GNC were the Muslim Brotherhood’s (MB) Justice and Construction Party (JCP) and the secular National Forces Alliance (NFA); however, the people remained skeptical of political parties, with just over a quarter of the population claiming trust. As a result, the first election had 120 members elected as individuals and only 80 members by party affiliation.¹⁴³ With general distrust and lack of unity, the GNC found itself in endless debate and indecisiveness.

¹³⁸ Brahimi, “Libya’s Revolution,” 616.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 617.

¹⁴⁰ Gaub, “A Libyan Recipe for Disaster,” 102.

¹⁴¹ Capasso, “Understanding Libya’s ‘Revolution,’” 116.

¹⁴² “Middle East Journal,” *Project MUSE* 66, no. 1 (2012): 143-144.

¹⁴³ Gaub, “A Libyan Recipe for Disaster,” 103.

The military also became a point of contention. Under the NTC, the Libyan armed forces fell under the Supreme Security Committee (SSC) (subordinate to the ministry of the interior), which failed to address any systemic problems with the military, i.e., unprofessionalism, poorly leadership, and bad equipment. Instead, the SSC and GNC competed for control of the armed forces, and when that did not work, the SSC tried to recruit regional and tribal militias of varying degrees of capability.¹⁴⁴ Some of the main militias were Libya Shield (aligned with and composed of the Libyan armed forces and generally Western militias), Libya Dawn (aligned with the JCP and Islamists), Zintan Militia (aligned with the NFA), and Misrata Militia (aligned with the JCP).

2. Social Costs

The first and most devastating impact to a population is the tremendous cost of civil war in terms of life. According to Jane's defense and security database, over 1,800 Libyans have been killed and over 3,000 wounded in fighting since the first free election in August 2012.¹⁴⁵ Militias have been a source of great strife, but at the same time, they provide some semblance of governance, primarily because of their regional ties. For example, the Abu Salim Martyr Brigade is often reported as providing public goods to the population, which helps explain why they are in violent opposition to Islamic Shura Youth Council (MSSI)—because MSSI competes for influence in the daily life of their hometown.

Trust is at the root of the problems seen between militias and politics. In the House of Representatives (HoR), following the 2014 elections, the JCP feared they would be purged by the NFA and positions such as the grand mufti would be dissolved, along with Islamist brigades—though the real anxiety lay with the uncertainty of Hiftar's intentions.¹⁴⁶ The launch of Operation Dignity and the counteroffensive by Libya Dawn exemplifies this distrust, which has manifested itself in indiscriminate attacks, human-

¹⁴⁴ Gaub, "A Libyan Recipe for Disaster," 107-108.

¹⁴⁵ "Terrorism and Insurgency Centre," IHS Jane's Filters, <https://janes.ihs.com.libproxy.nps.edu/CustomPages/Janes/JTICOnlineGrid.aspx>.

¹⁴⁶ Alison Pargeter, "Libya: The Politics of Revenge," *Al Jazeera Center for Studies*, August 26, 2014, 5.

rights abuses, and violations of international humanitarian law. As of October 2014, the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated 287,000 IDPs who have attempted to flee these abuses.¹⁴⁷ Islamists were the targets of repression during the Gaddafi era and now, with the return of General Hiftar, the targeting of Islamists is seen as a continuation of that repression. Likewise, just as Gaddafi's repression of Islamists drove them underground and fostered a more radical outlook, e.g. LIFG, so too are current moderate Islamists driven to align with more radical groups to strengthen their chances of survival.¹⁴⁸

3. Judicial and Legal Issues

Very little attention was paid by the transitional government and the elected government to the transition of rule of law and a judiciary strategy. Many viewed the judicial system as still sympathetic to the old regime and as such, incapable of trying Gaddafi's son, Saif al-Islam.¹⁴⁹ However, there were structural changes made to the judiciary. The Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) was altered to make it more independent from government, there was a ban placed on all special tribunals, and the SJC made a commitment to human rights.¹⁵⁰

Post-revolutionary judicial action became questionable. Trials for former regime officials were seen as corrupt, even though the government vetted the adjudicated judges internally, and perception became reality. The mufti of Tripoli even came forward and proclaimed that the judiciary had three purposes: 1) to eliminate statutes in conflict with Islamic law, 2) to eliminate laws regarding unfair regulation, and 3) to purge corrupt judges.¹⁵¹

In October 2012, the SJC presented the GNC with a proposal to purge every judge and retain only those who could show active participation in and support of the 17

¹⁴⁷ "Libya: Rule of the Gun: Abductions, Torture and other Militia Abuses in Western Libya," Amnesty International, (London, United Kingdom: Amnesty International, 2014), 5-6.

¹⁴⁸ Brahimi, "Libya's Revolution," 616.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 114.

¹⁵⁰ "Trial by Error," ICG, 16.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 17.

February revolution. These remaining judges would form a secret committee to screen and hire new judges. The difficulty with this plan was twofold. First, in a time of public skepticism, it is impossible to maintain transparency and also establish a secret committee, and second, the effectiveness of a purge without due process is questionable at best.¹⁵²

Distancing oneself from anything related to the Gaddafi regime seemed to be the common course of action for members of the transitional government. The legislature passed a political-isolation law that placed a “ten-year ban from office for anyone who is associated with the former regime or ‘took a position against the 17 February revolution.’”¹⁵³ The law passed in May 2013 and resulted in a loss of incumbent expertise, and almost two years later, in February 2015, the GNC repealed the law. In the two-year period, senior officials were forced to step down, including those who commanded units in the armed forces. Highly reminiscent of the “de-Ba’athification” in Iraq, the struggling Libyan military was delivered a final coup de grâce, further solidifying the government’s reliance on militias.¹⁵⁴

A final piece of questionable legislation was also passed early in the revolution but later repealed. Known as Law 37, this legislation “prohibited criticism of the revolution, the state, Libyan institutions and Islam, as well as ‘propaganda.’”¹⁵⁵ The law was essentially a carryover from a piece of Gaddafi legislation and brought into question the revolution’s commitment to freedoms and rights for the people.

As was the case with Jamahiriya, judges remain untrained, with estimates suggesting that “roughly 30–40 percent of judges did not go through formal legal training.”¹⁵⁶ These new courts looked eerily like the old Gaddafi courts, but now were continually undermined by militias, which are generally held in high esteem by the

¹⁵² “Trial by Error,” ICG, 21.

¹⁵³ Gaub, “A Libyan Recipe for Disaster,” 114.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 114-115.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 115.

¹⁵⁶ “Trial by Error,” ICG, 11.

population. This created a culture of impunity that glorified criminals as heroes and allowed abuses, torture, and illegal detentions to continue without recrimination.¹⁵⁷

4. Economic

Control over resources became a goal for all parties involved. Raids on military camps and depots to obtain small, medium, and heavy weapons—from rifles to surface-to-air missiles—were common, and without a professional military to stand in the way, the weapons were ripe for the taking. Foreign investors also were caught in the crossfire, such as “a Chinese construction company in Ajdabiya that had been taken over by Ansar al-Shari’a” and was consequently bombed by General Hiftar’s forces.¹⁵⁸ But it was control over oil that most devastated the ability to sustain government.

Hydrocarbon production had been decreased nearly 100 percent by the end of 2011, the only production that occurred was for domestic consumption. The International Energy Agency had to coordinate a draw of 60 million barrels of emergency oil reserves to cover the loss from Libya, the first time since the 2005 response to Hurricane Katrina. Production was further hampered by a blockade of eastern port facilities in late 2013 that remained in effect until April 2014. Oil and gas exports accounted for 96 percent of the country’s revenue. With the exception of 2012, when the oil industry rebounded slightly, each year production declined to the point in 2014 when Libya earned \$4 billion in six months, whereas before the conflict it was earning \$4 billion monthly. Figure 6 shows a chart of the ebb and flow of oil production as a result of the revolution.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁷ “Trial by Error,” ICG, 28-31.

¹⁵⁸ Andrew McGregor, “Libya’s Ansar al-Shari’a Declares the Islamic Emirate of Benghazi,” *Terrorism Monitor* 12, no. 16 (2014): 9.

¹⁵⁹ “Country Analysis Brief: Libya,” US Energy Information Administration, 2-5.

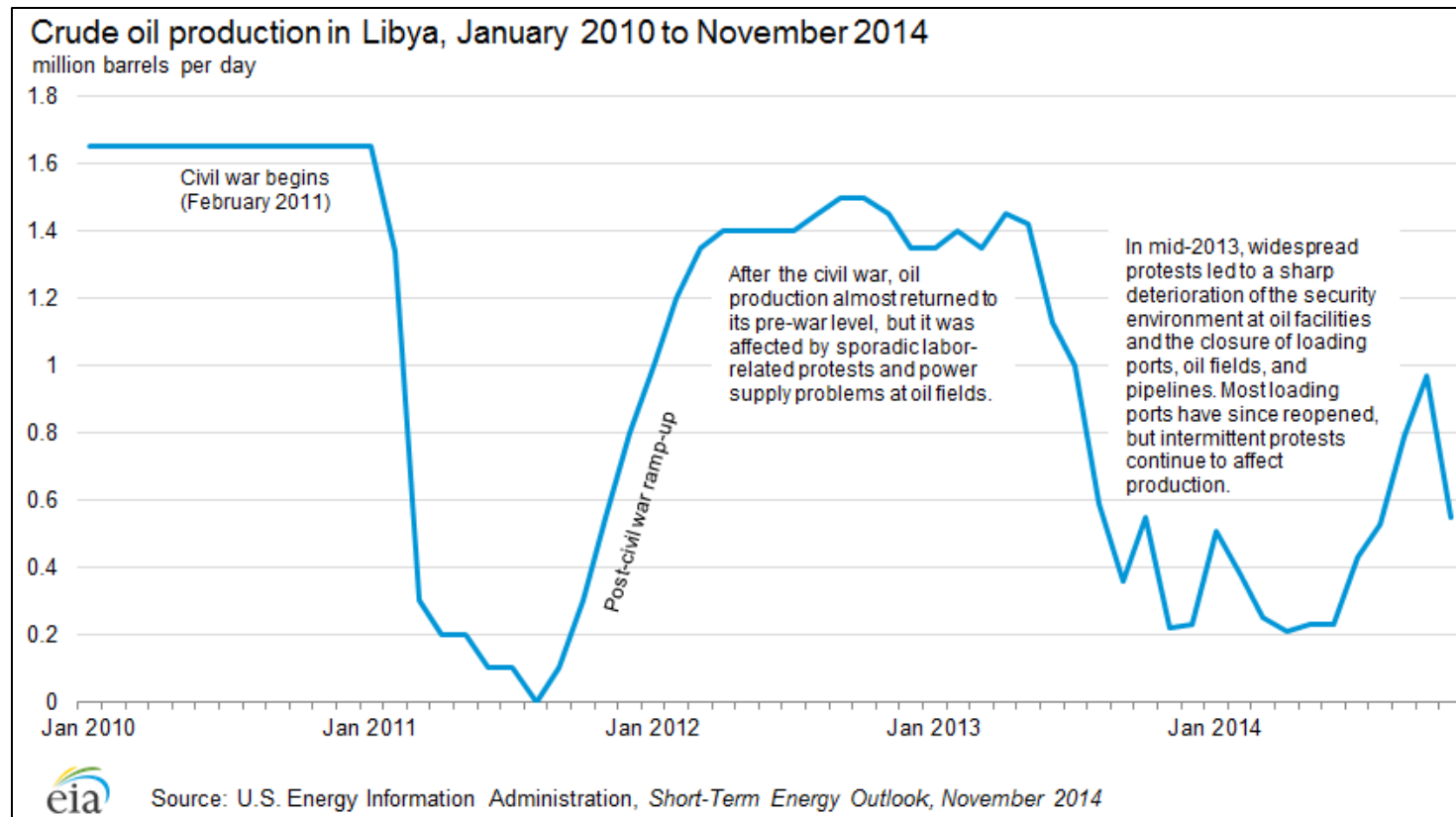


Figure 6. Crude Oil Production in Libya, January 2010 to November 2014¹⁶⁰

¹⁶⁰ “Country Analysis Brief: Libya,” US Energy Information Administration, 7.

The remainder of this chapter broadly outlines the various militias and organizations operating in Libya. The number of militias varies greatly, but is typically generalized as hundreds. The purpose of the following sections is not to provide an exhaustive list, but rather a description of the militias and organizations sufficient to raise one specific question: how do these groups contribute to the stability or instability of Libya and the region? This question forms the basis of the next chapter as the groups are categorized as either political or Islamist and their sub-categorizes are defined.

B. POLITICAL FORCES

The current political system has gone through significant changes since the revolution. At first there was the NTC, which established initial governance, but more importantly, enabled elections. In August 2012, elections were held and the GNC was formed. The MB and other Islamist parties did not do as well as they had hoped. The MB, through its political party, the JCP, developed political alliances to challenge the NFA. The political competition continued to manifest itself outside politics and tension rose to the point where Islamist parties separated from government and formed their own shadow government. The people called for new elections in 2014, and in June, 200 members were elected to the House of Representatives (HoR), which was no longer called the GNC. As of early 2015, the officially recognized government, the HoR, is located in the east of the city Tobruk and lead by PM Abdullah al-Thinni. It is backed by General Khalifa Hifter and the Zintan militia. The rival Islamist government, the new GNC, is located in Tripoli and lead by PM Omar al Hassi. They are backed by Libya Dawn and a series of other Islamist militias.

Adding to the internal political dynamics are regional actors with a vested interest in supporting either the HoR or GNC. These external dynamics manifest themselves in a number of ways. For example, Egypt launched a series of air strikes into Libya against ISIS targets following the kidnapping and beheading of 21 Egyptian Coptic Christians. Other countries have taken sides between the secular political parties and the MB. Foreign involvement has exacerbated the chaos and turned the Libyan civil war into a proxy war, with Turkey, Qatar, and Sudan siding with the MB and Islamists, and the

United Arab Emirates and Egypt supporting Hiftar and the nationalists.¹⁶¹ With the expansion of ISIS into the area, it is likely that these proxy battles will become more overt.

1. Government Forces

Table 1 is a list of active government forces, but the table excludes militias that were co-opted to maintain security post revolution. The militias that were co-opted, even if they receive a salary from the government, are categorized as regional militias. The separation was done to distinguish between the formal security forces of Libya and the informal security forces. Some formal security organizations, like Libya Shield, do serve as umbrella organizations which hold regional militias as members. This is explained in the text of the tables, but helps to highlight why security reform in Libya is difficult.

¹⁶¹ Andrew Engel, "PolicyWatch 2295: Libya's Other Battle," The Washington Institute, last modified July 28, 2014, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/libyas-other-battle>.

Table 1. Government Forces

Name	Summary	Strategic Goal	Leadership	Affiliates
Libyan Armed Forces ¹⁶²	The four LAF branches are the army, navy, air force, and air defense, carried over from the Gaddafi regime and initially affected by the political-isolation law, which has recently been repealed.	Protect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Libya	Ministry of Defense: Brigadier Gen. Mas'ud Arumah; Army: Major General Abdulsalam al-Obaid; Navy: Commodore Hassan Ali Bushnak; Air Force: none	Major Gen. Hiftar; Libyan Ground Forces; Libyan Air Force; Libyan Air Defense Forces; Libyan Navy
Libya Shield ¹⁶³	The largest pro-HoR umbrella organization in Libya. Originally activated by the NTC due to lack of a capable armed force and to consolidate rebel forces. Comprises four brigades across Libya, consisting of many smaller regional militias and organizations with diverse allegiances and goals. Competes for power with rival umbrella organization, Libya Dawn.	Provide security in accordance with government guidelines; provide command and control of rebel militias	Wissam Ben Hamid	Numerous

¹⁶² "Libya Armed Forces," Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment, last modified October 27, 2014, <https://janes.ihs.com.libproxy.nps.edu/CustomPages/Janes/DisplayPage.aspx?ItemId=1303736>.

¹⁶³ "Guide to Key Libyan Militias," BBC, May 20, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-19744533>.

Name	Summary	Strategic Goal	Leadership	Affiliates
General Hiftar Forces ¹⁶⁴	General Hiftar defected from the Gaddafi regime in the late 1980s, and returned to Libya to aid the revolution in 2014. He garnered support from security forces opposed to Islamists, particularly Ansar al Sharia in Libya (AAL). His forces are approximately 6,000 strong and often referred to as the Libyan National Army (LNA), but in reality, he controls only a portion of the official army. He is best known for Operation Dignity, the targeting of Islamist organizations in eastern Libya and is seen as posturing for political position.	Defeat Islamist militias	Major-General Khalifa Hiftar	Egypt; Saiqa Special Forces, Ajdabiya intelligence unit
National Security Directorate ¹⁶⁵	Libya's police force, responsible for general protection of the public and investigations	Protect the population		
Anti-Crime Unit and Special Deterrence Force ¹⁶⁶	These two units are responsible for investigations, with a focus on counter-narcotics. The anti-crime unit is accused of complicity in the kidnapping of former prime minister Ali Zidan.	Counter-Narcotic		
Petroleum Facilities Guard ¹⁶⁷	Established in 2012 to protect Libya's oil, they have been known to prevent oil shipments if they sense corruption in the central government.	Secure Libya's vital economic interests	Ibrahim Jadhnan	Libyan Armed Forces

¹⁶⁴ "Non-State Armed Groups, Libya," Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – North Africa, last modified October 29, 2014, 5.

¹⁶⁵ "Guide to Key Libyan Militias," BBC.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

2. Regional Militia

Table 2 accounts for a number of regional militias that were created following the 17 February revolution. Some regional militias formed alliances with the government or Islamist groups—the alliance is annotated in the text of the table whenever multiple alliances exist. The reliance of the government on regional militias for security is one of necessity, but has the consequence putting informal power at odds with formal power. The following regional militia are deeply entrenched in fighting one another, Islamist forces, and governmental forces for power and control over territory, politics, and economic resources.

Table 2. Regional Militias

Name	Summary	Strategic Goal	Leadership	Affiliates
Zintan Revolutionary Military Council ¹⁶⁸	In control of some of the most powerful militias in Tripoli and aligned with the Warfallah tribe; second largest in the country next to Misrata. Though a regional militia, supported and funded by the Libyan government. Its main rival is the Misrata militia. Includes members from 23 Zintan and Nafusa Mountain militias, and is best known for capturing Saif al-Islam Gaddafi (son of Gaddafi) and defending Tripoli airport from Libya Dawn during Operation Dignity.	Maintain control over traditional areas surrounding Tripoli and influence policy	Osama al-Juwali, Mukhtar Khalifah Shahub	Al-Qaaqaa Brigade, Al-Sawaiq Brigade
Misrata Militias ¹⁶⁹	Started as regional revolutionary militias; under PM Zidan, felt marginalized and took a closer stance with the JCP. Has been reported at 40,000 members deployed throughout Libya. Aligned with the Mashasha tribe and rivalries with the Zintan militia.	Promote MB/JCP rule in government; fierce rejection of Gaddafi institutions	Ali Mousa (leader of Misrata Union of Revolutionaries)	MBs JCP

¹⁶⁸ “Non-State Armed Groups,” Jane’s, 1-2.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, 3-4.

Name	Summary	Strategic Goal	Leadership	Affiliates
Libyan Revolutionary Operations Room (LROR) ¹⁷⁰	LROR was established to provide security in the capital Tripoli and are ideologically aligned with the MB's JCP. Responsible for the kidnapping of former-prime-minister Ali Zidan. Subsequently deactivated, then reactivated by the new GNC.	Provide Security in Tripoli; anti-Hiftar force	Adel al-Tarhouni	Libya Shield BDE 1; Rafallah al-Sahati BDE; 17 February Martyrs BDE
Al-Qaaqaa Brigade (BDE) ¹⁷¹	Aligned with the Zintan militia and tasked with unconventional missions: protection of government officials, border security, and law and order in Tripoli. Al-Qaaqaa BDE was with the defense of Tripoli airport in mid-2014. Strength is approximately 18,000 fighters; the most professional and well equipped of militias	Control over Tripoli, anti-Islamist	Zintan Revolutionary Military Council; Al-Sawaiq BDE	Uthman Mulaqithah
Al-Sawaiq BDE ¹⁷²	Primarily Zintanis living in Tripoli who mostly work alongside the Al-Qaaqaa BDE	Control over Tripoli, anti-Islamist	Zintan Revolutionary Military Council, Al-Sawaiq BDE; Al-Qaaqaa BDE	Emad al-Trabulsi

¹⁷⁰ Jon Mitchell, "War in Libya and its Futures: State of Play – Islamist & Misrata Forces (1)," Red Team Analysis Society, last modified January 5, 2015, <https://www.redanalysis.org/2015/01/26/war-libya-futures-state-play-islamist-misrata-forces-2/>.

¹⁷¹ "Non-State Armed Groups," Jane's, 2.

¹⁷² Ibid.

Name	Summary	Strategic Goal	Leadership	Affiliates
Army of Cyrenaica ¹⁷³	Military arm of Cyrenaica, which has avoided conflict with the Libyan government. Seeks autonomy from the government in the form of federalism—not a separatist movement. A semblance of autonomy is key. Leaders are from military ranks and King Idris relatives.	Autonomy of the Cyrenaica in the form of Federalism	Figurehead: Ahmed Zubair al-Sanussi (great-nephew of King Idris) Leader: Hamid Hassi head of political bureau of Cyrenaica: Ibrahim Jadhran	Cyrenaica Protection Force; Political Bureau of Cyrenaica
Cyrenaica Protection Force ¹⁷⁴	Works closely with the army of Cyrenaica. Best known for disruption of Libyan economy through control of oil facilities in Ras Lanuf, Zueitina, and Sidra, to make a statement about economic inequalities. Their forces' size is assessed at more than 3,000; has a support base in Ajdabiya.	Cyrenaica Autonomy on basis of corruption and inequality within the petroleum sector	Colonel Najeeb al-Hassi Head of Political Bureau of Cyrenaica: Ibrahim Jadhran	Army of Cyrenaica; Political Bureau of Cyrenaica; Petroleum Facilities Guard (PFG).
Tripoli Revolutionaries Council ¹⁷⁵	Composed of former revolutionaries from Zintan. The Tripoli Revolutionary Council is not associated with the Zintani militia. They are thought to exist to counter influence from the Tripoli Military Council (Islamist).	To bring civil order in Tripoli; likely, to counter Tripoli Military Council	Abdullah Naker	
Tripoli Military Council ¹⁷⁶	Comprises former LIFG members and holds financial and political ties to Qatar. Roughly 2,000 members at odds with the Tripoli Revolutionaries Council. Willing to support sharia as the sole source of law in Libya.	Gain dominance in Tripoli; preserve Islamist role in government	Abd al-Hakim Belhajj (former LIFG leader); Salah Badri	MBs JCP; LIFG; Qatar

¹⁷³ Ibid., 4.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 4-5.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 3.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

C. ISLAMIST FORCES

Islamist forces generally fall into two categories: nationalist and jihadist. The Islamist nationalists, sometimes referred to as political Islamism or Salafi nationalism, “adopts contemporary...models of organization – the political party...to focus their energies on winning political power...[and] modify their agendas and discourses accordingly” to execute Islamic political reform from within the government.¹⁷⁷ This method of bringing change to the community from within the existing government typically implies a long-term approach to Islamism, meaning that most changes will be incremental rather than large, sweeping reform, simply by virtue of the slow process of politics. In addition to slow change, a risk to following the nationalist route is that if the Islamist party loses an election, it signals the end of the movement, and this can be unpalatable to the party. This is precisely what happened to the JCP as they were forced to form alliances with sympathetic parties to bolster their standing within the NTC and GNC, which ultimately led to the shadow/parallel new GNC government’s being established in Tripoli in late 2014.

Islamist jihadists, sometimes referred to as Salafi jihadists, argue that a Western form of governance and Islam are incompatible and the only way to achieve change is through violence. The distinction between an Islamist jihadist and defensive form of jihad, e.g., protection from foreign rule, “arises primarily out of a radical doctrine expressing a definite preference for violent over non-violent strategies” of reform—a complete overhaul of government through violent means.¹⁷⁸ In the case of Libya, Gaddafi, circa 1995, actively repelled LIFG attempts at political and institutional change; however, the contemporary operating environment and four years of civil war have caused Islamist groups to take more aggressive stances towards change. Many moderate Islamists who would have fallen in the nationalist school have formed alliances with the

¹⁷⁷ “Understanding Islamism,” *International Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report Number 37*, March 2, 2005, 6.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 14.

more violent forms of Islamism. Even more troubling is that some groups have affiliated themselves with ISIS and the pursuit of a global caliphate.

The umbrella organizations of Libya Dawn and Libya Shield can be problematic due to their size. As a rule of thumb, the Libya Dawn forces are supportive of the JCP and the new GNC, whereas Libya Shield supports the recognized government HoR. However, some members of Libya Shield are also members of subordinate umbrella organizations that support Libya Dawn initiatives. Therefore, it is advantageous to view Libya Dawn and Libya Shield as legacy organizations (though they are technically still active). Analysis of the subordinate umbrella organizations, such as the Shura Council of Benghazi Revolutionaries, is more telling of the evolving operational environment.

1. Enter ISIS

At the time of this writing, ISIS has officially expanded its territory into Libya and Egypt, which is its first attempt to obtain non-contiguous territory. Libya, through its porous borders, sympathetic population, and lack of policing, has long been known to support the global jihad movements of AQ and ISIS. Figure 7 shows a tweet and message aimed at potential ISIS recruits, suggesting that Libya is a worthwhile venture and one should fight in the name of ISIS in Libya.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁹ Gilad Shiloach, "ISIS to North Africans: Syria's Too Far? Come to Libya," Vocativ, last modified January 16, 2015, <http://www.vocativ.com/world/libya/isis-inviting-north-africans-syria-far-come-libya/>.



Figure 7. ISIS Recruitment for Libya¹⁸⁰

ISIS has already made inroads in Libya, particularly with the Derna-based group Majlis Shura Shabab al-Islam (MSSI). MSSI turned former government buildings into ISIS offices and began providing public goods within the city; however it is not without competition. The Abu Salim Martyrs Brigade proclaimed that they will “never pledge *baya* (a religiously binding oath of allegiance) to anyone outside Libya.”¹⁸¹ ISIS has appointed two emirs for eastern and western Libya: a Yemeni by the name of Mohammad Abdullah (alias Abu al-Baraa al Azdi) as the emir of the east and, in the west, a Tunisian named Abu Talha.¹⁸²

Aside from expanding the domain of the caliphate, it is difficult to determine what the true intent is for ISIS in entering Libya and Egypt. Since their arrival in Libya, some of their attention has been on recruiting members of AAL. This line of effort has not been overly successful, due to existing alliances between AAL and other Islamist organizations in Libya. That being said, it is likely that AAL will experience some fissures in their organization between the extreme believers and the more nationalistically aligned fighters. Gaining the influence of AAL will bolster ISIS’s standing within Libya,

¹⁸⁰ Shiloach, “ISIS to North Africans,” *Vocativ*.

¹⁸¹ Zelin, “The Islamic State’s First Colony.”

¹⁸² Maggie Michael, “ISIS Militants Find a Strategic Foothold in Chaotic Libya,” *Daily Star*, February 20, 2015, <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2015/Feb-20/288083-isis-militants-find-a-strategic-foothold-in-chaotic-libya.ashx>.

particularly against a government already in the midst of civil war, and expand ISIS's access to areas outside of Derna.

Other possibilities exist as well. Another conjecture holds that ISIS needs to establish a foothold in either Libya or Egypt to extend its reach into Europe. Many Libyans fleeing the country have already gained access to Europe via Italy—an immigration route that ISIS could use as well. Another argument is that Libya can provide resources that ISIS needs, specifically oil for revenue and stockpiles of military-grade weapons systems left over from the Gaddafi regime.¹⁸³

Oil is always a contentious issue. Coalition airstrikes in Iraq are not only targeting ISIS fighters and equipment, but also refineries, which has caused ISIS fighters to offset the loss by increasing taxes on the population to sustain operations. ISIS in eastern Syria refines and smuggles 50,000 barrels a day for a return of several million dollars a day.¹⁸⁴ It is possible that ISIS is drawn to Libya purely for its oil and high capacity for smuggling operations, which Libyans learned from years of smuggling subsidized goods under Gaddafi.

What appears to be most likely purpose behind ISIS's arrival in Libya is all of the above. ISIS already sees AAL support as critical to gaining access throughout Libya. ISIS is not only focused on population centers, but they have also dispatched fighters to control resources. And freedom of operations in Libya provides them with the ability to project power into Europe if they choose. ISIS has already denounced every organization in Libya that has not pledged allegiance to itself, including moderate Islamists. Thus, far, the only alliances ISIS has been able to establish in Libya are with MSSI and with individual hardliners who defected from moderate Islamist organizations.

¹⁸³ Michael, "ISIS Militants," *The Daily Star*.

¹⁸⁴ Mitchell Prothero, "As Airstrikes Damage Islamic State, it Seeks 'Money, Money, Money,'" McClatchy DC, March 3, 2015, <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2015/03/03/258428/as-airstrikes-damage-islamic-state.html>.

2. Islamist Organizations

Reflecting the fluid nature of Islamist relationships, nationalistic and jihadist groups are consolidated in Table 3. As a rule, Islamist groups with a more nationalist ideology are listed first and jihadist organizations appear last. Islamist forces have also created their own umbrella organizations. The umbrella organizations, like the Shura Council of Benghazi Revolutionaries, may contain both nationalist and Jihadist Islamists, which may make long term solutions difficult to obtain.

Table 3. Islamist Organizations

Name	Summary	Strategic Goal	Leadership	Affiliates
Libya Dawn (Fajr Libya) ¹⁸⁵	Umbrella organization for both regional and Islamist organizations. Opposed to the HoR, support the MB's JCP, and favor the political-isolation law (recently repealed). Known for initiating Operation Dawn, the attack on Zintani forces at Tripoli airport in July 2014.	Defend Islamist groups linked to MB; support the new GNC; advocate political Islam	Ministry of Defense/various sub-group leaders	LROR; Zawiay militias, Libya Central Shield Force; allied with AAL
Shura Council of Benghazi Revolutionaries (SCBR) ¹⁸⁶	Started circa June 2014 with strong Islamist views. Declared Benghazi part of the Islamic emirate. Known for expelling the al-Saiqah special forces from Benghazi and establishing the Islamic emirate.	Establish sharia as the sole source of law	Military leader: Wisam Ben Hamid; Amir: Muhammad Al-Zahawi (deceased); ¹⁸⁷ Military commander: Jalal Makhzoum	Libya Shield BDE 1; 17 February BDE; Rafallah Sahati BDE; possible associations with Jaysh Al-Mujahideen; AAL

¹⁸⁵ Mitchell, "Islamist & Misrata Forces (1)," Red Team Analysis Society.

¹⁸⁶ McGregor, "Libya's Ansar al-Shari'a," *Terrorism Monitor*, 8-9.

¹⁸⁷ Terrorism Research and Analysis Consortium, last accessed February 22, 2015, <http://www.trackingterrorism.org.libproxy.nps.edu/group/ansar-al-sharia-libya-asl>.

Name	Summary	Strategic Goal	Leadership	Affiliates
Libya Shield BDE 1 ¹⁸⁸	Subordinate organization of Libya Shield, primarily responsible for security in the Benghazi region. Moderate Islamist beliefs. Gen. Hiftar's Operation Dignity drove group towards hardline Salafists to counter the advance of Hiftar.	Counter-Hiftar force; Moderate Islamist views	Wisam Bin Hamid	SCBR and sub-groups; AAL
Rafallah al-Sahati BDE aka Libya Shield BDE 2 ¹⁸⁹	Named after a martyr of the 17February revolution, started as a subordinate unit to the 17 February Martyrs BDE and now under the umbrella of Benghazi Revolutionary Operations Room. Assessed to have 1,000 fighters concentrating on police efforts in eastern Libya and Kufra (south). Claim to have warned the U.S. mission in Benghazi of imminent attack.	Maintain regional interest while supporting Islamist movements throughout	Mohamad al-Gharabi; Ismail al-Sallabi	SCBR and sub-groups; AAL

¹⁸⁸ Jon Mitchell, "War in Libya and its Futures: State of Play – Islamist Forces (2)," Red Team Analysis Society, last modified January 26, 2015, <https://www.redanalysis.org/2015/01/26/war-libya-futures-state-play-islamist-misrata-forces-2/>

¹⁸⁹ "Non-State Armed Groups," Jane's, 6-7.

Name	Summary	Strategic Goal	Leadership	Affiliates
17 February Martyrs BDE ¹⁹⁰	Originally a policing force in eastern Libya under Benghazi Revolutionary Operations Room, but disassociated with the central government and aligned with Islamists. Reportedly 1.5–3,000 members. Self-proclaimed as the best armed militia, with anti-aircraft, and man-portable air-defense system (MANPADS). Were responsible for the protection of the American consulate in Benghazi.	Maintain regional interest while supporting Islamist movements throughout	Fawzi Bukatif	SCBR and sub-groups; AAL
Abu Salim Martyrs BDE ¹⁹¹	Composed of former members of LIFG and named after Gaddafi prison. Partners with AAL (not an alliance). Operates predominantly in Derna. Reportedly at odds with Islamic Youth Shura Council because of clashing ideologies and assassinations of Abu Salim Martyrs BDE leadership. ¹⁹²	Establish sharia as sole source of law; counter- Hiftar Force	Abdul-Hakim al-Hasadi (former Guantanamo Bay detainee)	Mujahedeen Shura Council of Derna, associated with AAL

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 6.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 7-9.

¹⁹² Terrorism Research and Analysis Consortium, accessed February 22, 2015, <http://www.trackingterrorism.org.libproxy.nps.edu/group/abu-slim-martyrs-brigade>.

Name	Summary	Strategic Goal	Leadership	Affiliates
Ansar Al-Sharia in Libya (AAL) ¹⁹³	Best known for attack on Benghazi consulate, operates primarily out of Benghazi, Derna, Sirte, and Ajdabiya. Funnels fighters into Syria and Iraq, locally helps solve community problems. Reports suggest ties between ISIS and AAL are tenuous, though other reports suggest that AAL is a willing participant. This contradiction may be attributed to AAL's being a syndicate of two groups: Ansar al Sharia in Derna (AAS-D) and Ansar al Sharia in Benghazi (AAS-B). AAS-D may be sympathetic to ISIS ideology, whereas AAS-B may have a negative relationship. An unconfirmed report suggests ISIS killed the AAS-B Amir Muhammad Al-Zahawi; ISIS has increased AAL recruitment efforts since the death.	Establish sharia as sole source of law	Ahmed Abu Khattalah; Muhamed Ali al-Zahawi; and Sufian Ben Qumu (Ansar al Sharia in Derna and former GITMO); Muhammad Al-Zahawi (deceased) ¹⁹⁴	17 February Martyrs BDE; Rafallah al-Sahati BDE; AAS-B; AAS-D

¹⁹³ "Non-State Armed Groups," Jane's, 5-6.

¹⁹⁴ Terrorism Research and Analysis Consortium, accessed February 22, 2015, <http://www.trackingterrorism.org.libproxy.nps.edu/group/ansar-al-sharia-libya-asl>.

Name	Summary	Strategic Goal	Leadership	Affiliates
Majlis Shura Mujahidi Derna (Mujahideen Shura Council of Derna) ¹⁹⁵	Started in December 2014 by Abu Salim Martyrs BDE. Group founder and leader, Shaykh Salim Derby gave a speech announcing the new alliance and gave colleagues in Benghazi, the Shura Council of Benghazi Revolutionaries, a vow of support. Aside from the Abu Salim Martyrs BDE, it is unclear who else is a member of the Derna-based Islamist alliance. The Abu Salim Martyrs BDE is at odds with MSSI.	Counter- Hiftar Force; wants to establish sharia as the sole source of law	Shaykh Salim Derby	Abu Salim Martyrs BDE; Shura Council of Benghazi Revolutionaries; Factions of unconfirmed: AAL, Jaish Libya al Islami
Majlis Shura Shabab al-Islam (MSSI) ¹⁹⁶	AKA Islamic Shura Youth Council, known for officially establishing the Islamic Emirate in Derna in November 2014. Declared allegiance to IS in June, in October claimed Derna for IS, and was accepted in November. Has incorporated ISIS-style propaganda into daily activities. Fighting force consists of locals who travel to Syria and Iraq for jihad.	Incorporate Libya in caliphate; believes there is no room for Islam and democracy	Abu Taleb al-Jazrawey (Yemeni) ¹⁹⁷	ISIS, Battar BDE

¹⁹⁵ Mitchell, "Islamist Forces (2)," Red Team Analysis Society.

¹⁹⁶ Terrorism Research and Analysis Consortium, accessed February 22, 2015, <http://www.trackingterrorism.org.libproxy.nps.edu/group/islamic-youth-shura-council>.

¹⁹⁷ "Islamic State Activity in Libya," Kalam Institute for Network Science, last modified February 2, 2015, http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/files/live/sites/almonitor/files/documents/2015/IS_Activity_in_Libya.pdf.

Name	Summary	Strategic Goal	Leadership	Affiliates
Battar BDE ¹⁹⁸ (ISIS)	Consists of about 800 fighters, but began with 300 Libyans who returned from Syria and Iraq to begin an IS chapter. Reportedly has direct ties with IS leadership. Denounced the HoR, GNC, and regional militias and have expanded their reach from central Libya (Sirte) to Benghazi with additional pockets of influence in Tripoli and deep southern Tebu regions.	Expand the domain of the ISIS caliphate and prevent a democratic Libya	Emir of Dernah and Eastern Libya: Mohammaed Abdullah aka Abu al-Baraa al Azdi (Yemeni) Emir of Tripoli and Western Libya: Abu Talha (Tunisian) ¹⁹⁹	MSSI

¹⁹⁸ Matt Bauer, "Islamic State's Libyan Expeditionary Force," Center for Security Policy, last modified November 20, 2014, <http://www.centerforsecuritypolicy.org/2014/11/20/islamic-states-libyan-expeditionary-force/>.

¹⁹⁹ Maggie Michael, "Correction: Islamic State-Libya Story: How a Libyan City Joined the Islamic State Group," *ABC News Associated Press*, February 19, 2015, <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/islamic-state-militants-find-foothold-chaotic-libya-29062839?singlePage=true/>.

D. VISUALIZATIONS

Figure 8 shows the organization of national forces aligned with the HoR. Of note is how formal militia alliances are directed towards General Hiftar and not the actual Libyan military. This emphasizes the weakness of the military institutions, explains the massive opposition to Hiftar from Islamist alliances, and adds value to skepticism about Hiftar, suggesting he is posturing for a potential coup.

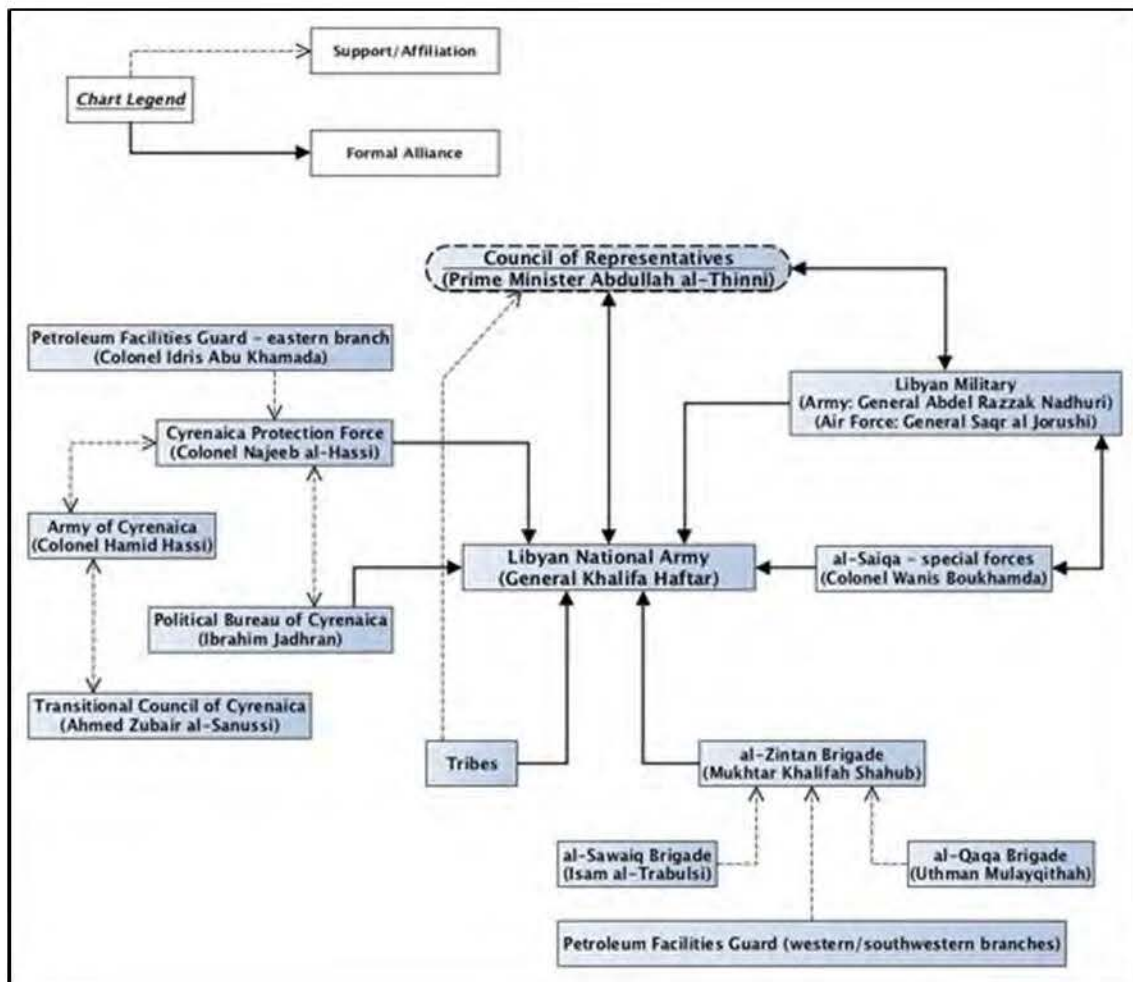


Figure 8. Nationalist Forces Organization Chart²⁰⁰

²⁰⁰ Jon Mitchell, War in Libya and Its Futures: State of Play – Nationalist Forces (1),” The Red (Team) Analysis Society, last modified November 3, 2014, <https://www.redanalysis.org/category/sfw-issues-2/war-sfw-issues-2/libya/>.

Figure 9 depicts Islamist organizations and applicable relationships. The Salafi-nationalist group is the most vulnerable and creates an opportunity for anti-ISIS forces to deplete the ISIS recruiting pool. The Abu Salim Martyr's BDE and MSSI have engaged in skirmishes over their differing ideologies and overall control of Derna. Relational data that shows the oath of support between the SCBR (gray) and the Mujahedeen Shura Council (blue) is not depicted in the organizational chart. If state-affiliated Islamists can pull the Abu Salim Martyrs BDE and the Mujahedeen Shura Council into their camp, they will successfully isolate ISIS and force AAL to make an important decision to choose sides, potentially forming fissures in the AAL.

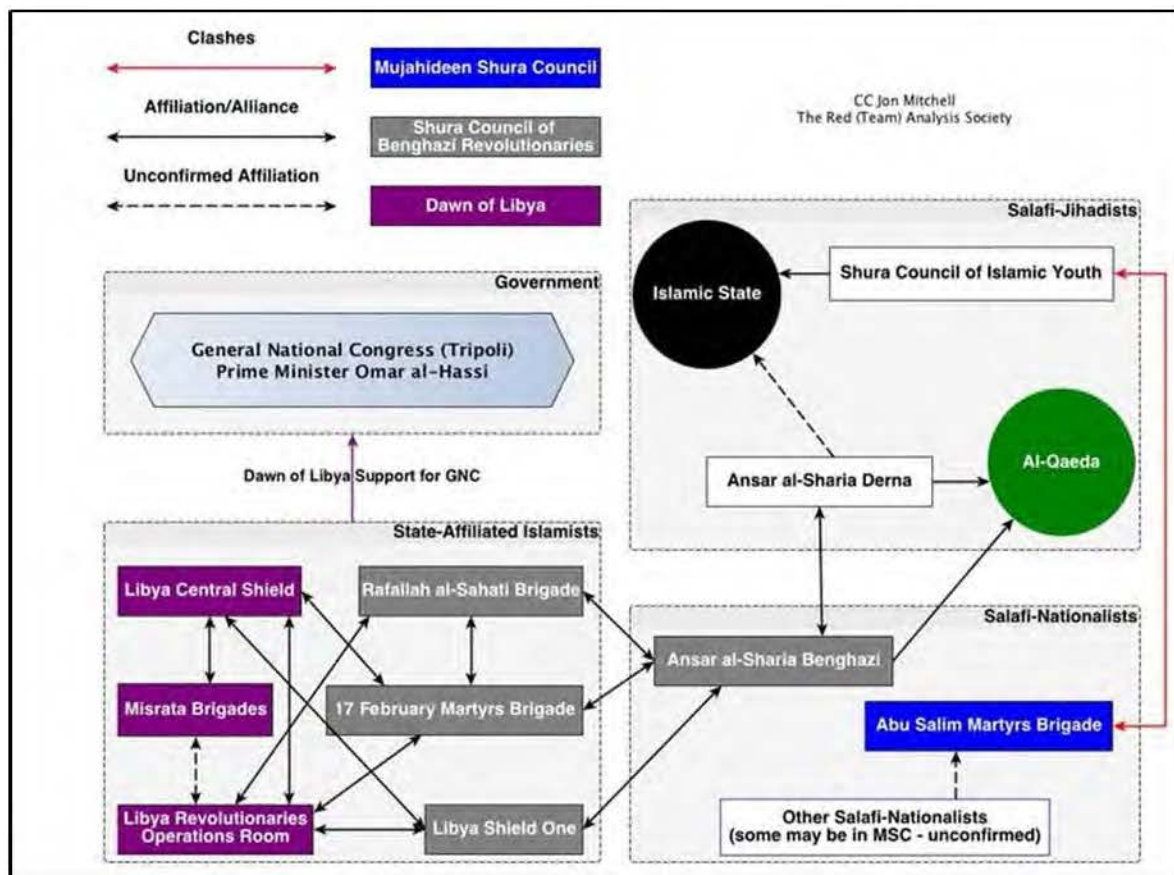


Figure 9. Islamist Relationships²⁰¹

²⁰¹ Mitchell, "Islamist Forces (2)," Red Team Analysis Society.

E. CONCLUSION

Gaddafi's era of jamahiriya created systemic problems throughout the government and society. The Libyan economy has been inadequate since the mid-1980s and suffered under UN and Western sanctions. Once war broke out, the militias were drawn naturally to see control of the oil refineries, as they are financial lifeline of every institution in Libya. This is why the various militias discussed in this chapter have at minimum a tenuous relationship with the Petroleum Facilities Guard.

Gaddafi's abolition of political parties and isolation of Islamists had equally devastating impacts on the country. First, the lack of parties created weakness and indecision in the newly formed government and escalated tension in the country, due to power struggles. Furthermore, Gaddafi's isolation of Islamism spawned insurgent groups like LIFG and created distrust of the government by groups in general and by Islamists especially, which resulted in the political-isolation law and like legislation and permeates the ideology of many terrorist groups today.

Perhaps the most telling of consequences was a reliance on militias for security. The NTC and the GNC "have all at one time 'registered' or 'deputized' coalitions of armed groups" ... and "what has arisen then can best be described as a hybrid security" sector.²⁰² This hybrid security apparatus has deep roots in local affairs and, most importantly, is incapable of impartiality. Each group has its prejudices about other groups and government, which prevents any meaningful agreement. For example, General Hiftar will never be able to form an alliance with any Islamist group—even if he were so inclined.

This chapter was more descriptive than analytical, by design. Gaining an understanding of the militias vying for power is an essential step in understanding the environment in Libya today. Chapter IV provides recommendations as to countering destabilizing agents in Libya.

²⁰² Frederic Wehrey, "Ending Libya's Civil War: Reconciling, Politics Rebuilding Security," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, September 2014, 4.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

For every step forward, Libya takes two steps back. When Muammar Gaddafi was killed in October 2011 and the NTC was established, the world rejoiced at the potential of a new free society. The first set of elections took place about a year later and again the world looked on in hope, but the two main political parties, the JCP and NFA, were unable to reconcile their differences. To add insult to injury, PM Ali Zeidan was kidnapped by the LROR, which began to reveal the depth of mistrust in government. In 2014 General Hiftar arrived and launched Operation Dignity, an anti-Islamist campaign that added more fuel to the JCP/NFA divide, sparking the formation of Libya Dawn, the Islamist anti-Hiftar movement, and setting a path towards civil war. Libya Dawn drew its membership both from Islamist groups and brigades aligned with the government-affiliated Libya Shield. Ironically, those organizations that defected from Libya Shield to fight Hiftar and the de-facto Libyan army are still paid a salary from the HoR.²⁰³

Following the elections in 2014, the country split between those who supported the HoR and those who supported the new parallel government, the GNC. The UN passed UNSCR 2174 in support of a comprehensive ceasefire to allow UN-brokered peace talks. However, shortly after UNSCR 2174, the Islamic State began making inroads in Libya. Just as General Hiftar's arrival in 2014 strengthened some sectors of government while destabilizing others, this new wild card, the Islamic State, will similarly stress the fragile institutions of Libya.

A. RECOMMENDATIONS

Forty-two years of rule under Muammar Gaddafi disintegrated in eight short months; however, there is a glimmer of hope in "that despite everything that has gone wrong in Libya in the last three years, the country has seen an unbroken line of popularly elected bodies."²⁰⁴ For these elected bodies to be successful, they will need to address

²⁰³ Mitchell, "Islamist Forces (2)," Red Team Analysis Society.

²⁰⁴ Ethan Chorin and Francis Ghiles, "In Libya, is Despair Key to a Turnaround?" *Notes Internacionales CIDOB* no. 97 (October 2014): 4.

three main drivers of instability: lack of trust, the Islamic State, and lack of economic reform.

1. Addressing Lack of Trust

Lack of trust has stymied cooperation and progress and intensified violence. For forty-two years, Muammar Gaddafi ingrained in the heads of every Libyan not to trust political parties, Islamists, or institutions. This social insecurity has manifested itself in contemporary Libya by lack of political dialogue, lack of security-sector reform, and lack of rule of law.

a. Lack of Political Dialogue

The two main political parties are the JCP and the MB; after that, the remaining political parties are many, but diffuse as to influence. A process of national reconciliation must be initiated to bring opposing sides together. The UN, with historical bona fides from pressing for Libyan independence in the 1950s, has already made headway, with UNSCR 2174 bringing about negotiations and a forthcoming ceasefire. Current UN-led negotiations between the GNC and HoR in Morocco are hopeful, having established tangible goals of national unity and constitution building.

Effective political dialogue will set the stage for all other reforms. The negotiations should establish a path for an inclusive government. This unified government needs to take a firm stance on terrorism while implementing a “face-saving formula that can bring the more pragmatic boycotting politicians from Misrata and the West into the fold.”²⁰⁵ Unity is the only way to dismantle Libya Dawn and Hiftar Forces, which are the primary combatants in the civil war.

Another issue that must be addressed is the treatment of moderate Islamists. Islamists during the Gaddafi era were repressed, and in the contemporary environment, they are fearful that this history will repeat itself. Islamist militias played a key role in the 17 February revolution and therefore “have a legitimacy born out of the position they

²⁰⁵ Wehrey, “Ending Libya’s Civil War,” 28-29.

played in the struggle”²⁰⁶ that should not go unrecognized. The new Libyan constitution should formally acknowledge the Islamist contribution, as well as others, to the 17 February revolution. Making their contributions part of recorded history will signal to the JCP that Islamist organizations will not be dissolved and that there is a place for their ideology in a democratic system. Furthermore, as Eric Hobsbawm might argue, Libya has the opportunity to invent a tradition of “social cohesion” between secularists and Islamists that would aid in “legitimizing institutions ... [and] authority.”²⁰⁷ Taking steps to ensure social cohesion may help in reconciliation.

Finally, the southern province of Fezzan is often overlooked, but is important to the stability of Libya. It contains the fossil water that supplies the north, has oil refineries, and is home to the Tubu. Racism against the black Tebus in the south has been historically rampant, and the Gaddafi regime stripped the Tubu of their citizenship. The Tubu fought alongside the revolutionaries, but the post-uprising government refused “to grant full identity cards to members of these [Tubu and Tuareg] communities,” denying them both citizenship and the right to vote.²⁰⁸ Libya already cannot control the flow of Tubu and Tuareg across the border from neighboring Sahel countries. The large population of Tubu and Tuareg throughout the Sahel is being drawn to Fezzan in the wake of instability. If racial discrimination is left unaddressed, the Libyan government risks alienating potential allies and creating new opposition to the state.

b. Lack of Security Sector Reform

Gaddafi established the RCs, which were able to supersede state authority, and by doing so divided formal and informal power. Militias and revolutionaries are continuing the same concepts, giving themselves immunity to formal laws.²⁰⁹ Libya Dawn and Hiftar forces are central to this conflict and must be brought into the fold. An option may

²⁰⁶ Alison Pargeter, “Islamist Militant Groups in Post-Qadhafi Libya,” *CTC Sentinel* 6, no. 2 (2013): 2.

²⁰⁷ Eric Hobsbawm, “Introduction: Inventing Traditions,” in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 9.

²⁰⁸ Howard, “Libya’s South,” 14.

²⁰⁹ Barak Barfi, “Khalifa Haftar: Rebuilding Libya from the Top Down,” Washington Institute for Near East Policy *Research Notes* no22, (August 2014): 9-10.

be to transition regional militias into a type of national guard, where they would remain regionally aligned, but still accountable to the government. Historically, large countries have obtained large armies and navies by formalizing relationships with armed groups.

In Libya's case, Libya Dawn and Hiftar's forces are the large armies that need to be formalized. While working through the legal system to hold accountable those units and groups that committed humanitarian-rights violations, a system must be in place to train newly integrated forces. It is important to remember that political dialogue and SSR are not mutually exclusive—SSR will not happen without political dialogue. Libya should also consider stopping payment to militias to force the function of SSR; however, this should only be done when there is a reintegration plan ready to be implemented.²¹⁰

General Hiftar is central to the issue of SSR. His presence and rhetoric inflame moderate Islamists, delegitimize the official military chain of command, and sow distrust in the population. If the Tobruk and Tripoli government are to give serious thought to reconciliation, Hiftar's role must be marginalized. The informal power that Hiftar possesses can easily rival top leadership, and his impunity in actions taken against Islamists is a constant reminder of why the two sides will be unable to reconcile. Aside from having questionable political motives, his actions have created Libya Dawn and caused a civil war to spiral out of control. At a minimum, Operation Dignity will have to be called off and "forces under Hiftar's command [transferred] to the authority of the chief of staff of the army."²¹¹ Libya must be prepared to part with Hiftar if it brings the HoR and GNC together in a unified government.

Reconciliation must "complement the constitution-making process; help build trust between various tribal, regional...and armed groups; and thereby facilitate disarmament."²¹² Though DDR may be a lofty goal, armed groups will continue to delegitimize the authority of government through the conflation of formal and informal power. Libya is different than most states in the sense that SSR and DDR are closely

²¹⁰ Wehrey, "Ending Libya's Civil War," 31-33.

²¹¹ Ibid., 28.

²¹² Christopher S. Chivvis and Jeffrey Martini, *Libya After Qaddafi: Lessons and Implications for the Future*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2014), 80.

related—the majority of the people the government wants to disarm are the same security forces they want to reform. The government should empower local communities to lead decentralized SSR/DDR efforts. For example, given that Misrata will have political representation and a militia that is formally aligned to the central government, they could lead DDR efforts in Misrata. For DDR to work, the fighters turning in their arms must have options for an alternative source of income—otherwise they may gravitate towards illicit activity.²¹³

c. Lack of Rule of Law

A survey of over 1,500 Libyan households indicated that despite the perceived weakness of security forces, most Libyans feel safe in their neighborhoods, which is attributed to their trust in “traditional leaders in resolving disputes and de-escalating clashes between families and tribes;” however, they still make formal complaints to security forces, which indicate “their desire for stronger state institutions.”²¹⁴

Reform of rule of law is significant for the future of Libya. Of all the sectors in Libya, “the unreformed character of a distrusted judiciary” remains the largest source of grievances.²¹⁵ Fact-finding commissions should be established to weed out corrupt judiciary officials, bring closure to those who were targeted by Gaddafi, and end the human-rights abuses committed, with relative impunity, by militias.²¹⁶ Following through on issues of rule of law will help redress popular grievances and strengthen formal authority over the informal authorities.

In addition to fact-finding commissions, a committee should be created to determine whether Islamic courts should be considered for reinstatement. Historically, there has always been a high demand for a dual court system, and when they existed they were typically free from corruption. Admittedly, there was a difference between the judges of the old and the current judiciary. Previously those judges were professionally

²¹³ Wehrey, “Ending Libya’s Civil War,” 33.

²¹⁴ “Searching for Stability: Perceptions of Security, Justice, and Firearms in Libya,” *Small Arms Survey Issue Brief no 1* (August 2014): 7.

²¹⁵ “Trial by Error,” ICG, 39.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

trained (and at times the judges were European) and Libya had not yet hit its oil boom. Muammar Gaddafi appointed loyalists and used the revenue stream from oil to sustain that loyalty; yet the public demand for Islamic civil courts persisted, though they were forbidden. Formalizing a system that reaches rural areas that the formal government is unable to reach and allows communities to maintain some level of autonomy may help create interim stability.

2. Addressing the Islamic State

ISIS has become a formidable foe in the MENA. Because of the number of proxy battles that surround ISIS, and Libya for that matter, this recommendation is limited to domestic and regional actors only. Libya should entertain a domestic solution to which bordering countries can play supporting roles.

Libya's population at large did not support the LIFG or any extreme Islamist movement; however, these movements did find sympathetic populations in Benghazi, Derna, Al-Bayda, and Ajdabiya.²¹⁷ It is no coincidence that these are the same areas that ISIS is looking to expand into; these areas must be protected from further ISIS influence, as they are the most susceptible to its ideology. Thus, the first step is to deny traditional sanctuaries. Secondly, the Libyan government must hedge its bets and empower righteous groups, like the Mujahedeen Shura Council of Derna and the Shura Council of Benghazi Revolutionaries, to combat ISIS and MSSI. This focus and dedication will go a long way in ensuring that the east does not become a sanctuary for ISIS. If ISIS is allowed to fester and expand, Libya may not be able to deal with the problem, but if Libya assumes a proactive role in countering ISIS ideology, there is hope of success. Furthermore, Libya has to do everything in its power to prevent AAL from swearing allegiance to ISIS. AAL has pockets of influence throughout the country. If the majority of AAL joins ISIS, it could serve as the foothold ISIS needs to expand its influence throughout Libya.

Securing the borders to prevent the flow of fighters and contraband is critical to stemming the spread of ISIS. The Tubu community "now has a dominant position in

²¹⁷ Brahimi, "Libya's Revolution," 617.

providing security at energy infrastructure, in border areas, and on key roads leading into Chad, Niger and Sudan.”²¹⁸ If granting rights and citizenship, as mentioned earlier, is successful, then the Tebu (and likely the Tuareg) community may play an active role in securing Fezzan.

Libya’s neighbors also have a critical role to play. Chad and Niger would benefit from focusing on their border security along the Libyan border, because the threat of ISIS can spread to their countries as well. In addition to that, the “EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) is equipped for training and assisting the Libyan government,” but may require additional manning from the West.²¹⁹ These options can assist in patching porous borders.

Finally, Egypt and Algeria are two of the most powerful countries in North Africa. Egypt has already shown its willingness to attack ISIS locations in Libya; however, Algeria has to contend with its non-interference policy.²²⁰ It is in Algeria’s interests not to leave ISIS up to Libyan devices. Algeria can offer its counterterrorism expertise and reduce the chances of the Islamic State’s spreading across already porous borders. There is also a diplomatic option—Algeria’s government is “on good terms with Algeria’s Brotherhood-affiliated Islamic parties, which can serve as the connecting link to Libyan Islamists” during the reconciliation process.²²¹ A strategic partnership between Egypt, Algeria, and Libya would prove beneficial in countering the spread of ISIS and stabilizing Libya.

3. Addressing Economic Reform

Libya’s economy has continued to ebb and flow throughout the post-Gaddafi years—something that is to be expected in a time of civil conflict. The main issue with Libya’s economy is that “public sector salaries and subsidies form a greater proportion of

²¹⁸ Howard, “Libya’s South,” 14.

²¹⁹ Chivvis and Martini, *Libya After Qaddafi*, 84.

²²⁰ Yacine Boudhane, Algeria’s Role in Solving the Libya Crisis,” *Fikra Forum*, August 28, 2014, <http://fikraforum.org/?p=5315>.

²²¹ Ibid.

the state budget today” than in the pre-revolutionary period.²²² Of Libyans who are employed, 80 percent are state employees, most of which belong to a sponsored armed group, and 60 percent of the country’s budget is allocated to paying salaries and subsidies. The remaining 40 percent is allocated towards debt.²²³

Economic reform is predicated on security. Libya needs to attract foreign investors to help create jobs, build infrastructure, and professionalize the economic industry. One method is to develop charter cities where “imported stability” is accomplished through outsourcing “good governance in that city or zone in order to accomplish a specific goal, often economic.”²²⁴ The private sector can be a powerful partner to the Libyan government; once invested, they will generally form a symbiotic relationship with the government, since it is in both their interests to be as successful as possible. Furthermore, Libya must protect its economic assets from potential threats, such as ISIS and competitors within its own government. ISIS likely has plans to take advantage of Libyan oil wealth to convert that resource into organizational profits.

An internal solution for economic reform must include a purposeful move away from Gaddafi-era practices. Libya’s main cash crops—oil and natural gas—need to return to pre-war levels. Currently the industries are state run, which has drawbacks. One problem is the potential of appointing leaders based on relationships and patronage. This was an institutional weakness of the Gaddafi regime, and oversight must be emplaced to ensure that old practices do not return. On the other end of the spectrum, instead of hiring based on patronage, a state-run facility may offer an easy venue for the population to work in, leading to over-manning. Hiring more employees may allow Libya to boast low unemployment, but it can reduce profitability and ultimately lower wages. Libya does not need to go the route of privatization, which risks returning to the status of a rentier state.

²²² Wehrey, “Ending Libya’s Civil War,” 33.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Chorin and Ghiles, “In Libya, is Despair Key to a Turnaround?” 4.

Rather, business rules for extracting resources must be explicit and transparent, with proper oversight commissions to reduce the possibility of corruption.²²⁵

Gaddafi built a system of reliance and patronage. Regulatory and oversight commissions must be established to ensure the economic system is free of abuse; this must be predicated on trust in the judiciary. Furthermore the population must be taken off its dependency on subsidies. In 2012, about 25 percent of Libya's GDP was paid out in subsidies. Not only does abusing subsidies hurt the economy, it also feeds into the larger security dilemma by encouraging smugglers and the use of Libyan smuggling routes. Gaddafi's abolition of need created a society that in hard times needed more and in good times wanted more. The need for more income drove the smuggling business and subsidized goods became the fuel that made the black market endure. Libya must figure out "how subsidies can be replaced by a more cost-effective social safety net."²²⁶

B. ROLES FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

The international community is left with a number of strategic options to help secure the borders, provide stability in Libya, and counter the threat of transnational terrorism. The following sections describe appropriate responses as they pertain to the West, the Islamic countries, and international organizations. Each of these members of the international community can play an integral role in bringing stability to the area.

1. The Western World

The West has had mixed emotions about the level of involvement they were willing to commit to Libya. NATO was quick to vacate the country following the death of Gaddafi and the United States has returned only under the cover of darkness to capture or kill high-value individuals belonging to AQ or AAL. The French appear to have taken the most aggressive stance of all towards the chaos in Libya.

²²⁵ Christopher S. Chivvis, et al., *Libya's Post-Qaddafi Transition*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2012), 11-12.

²²⁶ Mark Shaw and Fiona Mangan, "Illicit Trafficking and Libya's Transition: Profits and Losses," *Peaceworks*, (2014), 11-12.

French defense minister Jean-Yves Le Drian has repeatedly stated that the 3,000 French stationed in the Sahel countries on a permanent basis “may need to attack militants in Libya,” and that he is actively seeking UN approval for potential action.²²⁷ Western operations in Libya seem more likely with the expansion of ISIS into Libya. Selective targeting, with the approval of the UN, could allow the West to launch attacks against ISIS targets while maintaining a policy of non-interference in the Libyan internal conflict. From a U.S. perspective, “there is support among elements in Congress and the administration for actions against Islamic State wherever it operates, and for retribution against Ansar al-Shari’a.”²²⁸ Operations targeting ISIS can slow its span of control in Libya while allowing the GNC and HoR time to focus on reconciliation.

The West can also influence longer-term impacts in Libya. The security forces in Libya were long neglected by Gaddafi and suffered a lack of professionalization. Between the United States, UK, Italy, and Turkey, over 15,000 Libyan troops are in training in Bulgaria.²²⁹ Professionalization of the military can yield far-reaching gains. It can offset the reliance on regional militia and turn the regional militia into a reserve or provincial force. It also helps bring legitimacy to the government. However, training is not enough—the West should do an assessment to determine whether the forces trained should be “equipped...and possibly mentored in action.”²³⁰

2. The Islamic Nation-States

Libya has drawn the attention of international Islamic nation-states, some of which have already been discussed. These states generally fall into either the pro-Operation Dignity camp or the pro-Libya Dawn camp, for purposes that run from ideological alignment to global economics. Egypt, UAE, and Saudi Arabia are aligned with the pro-Dignity, side providing money and air-strike capability. The anti-Dawn

²²⁷ Richard Reeve, “Libya’s Proxy Battlefield,” Oxford Research Group, January 2014, http://www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk/publications/briefing_papers_and_reports/briefing_libya_proxy_battlefield.

²²⁸ Reeve, “Libya’s Proxy Battlefield,” 2014.

²²⁹ Chivvis and Martini, *Libya After Qaddafi*, 81.

²³⁰ Wolfgang Pusztai, “A Western Strategy for Libya,” Istituto Affari Internazionali, *Opinions on the Mediterranean*, (June 2014): 4.

backing comes from regional states such as Niger, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Senegal, “which have little capacity to intervene inside Libya but have been actively lobbying the UN” for an overarching pan-Sahel counterterrorism strategy.²³¹

On the other side are Qatar and Turkey. They have been accused by Libyan PM Abdullah al-Thinni of supplying weapons and materiel support to pro-Dawn Islamist groups.²³² The dynamic among Egypt, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Qatar has expressed a larger proxy battle among the countries’ differing ideologies. Turning a blind eye, the security council “has done little to question the breach of UN arms embargo that has allowed Egypt, Russia and others to arm Operation Dignity,” despite the 22 September 2014 non-interference pact.²³³

Morocco is slated to host a round of negotiations and can assist in minimizing the impact of the proxy war by using its relationship with Qatar and Turkey to discourage them from exacerbating the conflict in Libya. Morocco could ask Qatar to denounce Islamists who are gravitating towards Libya. The difficulty resides with convincing Egypt and UAE that the JCP is a better alternative to ISIS or another extreme form of Islam.²³⁴

3. International Organizations

The UN is leading the effort for political dialogue between the GNC and HoR to discuss peace and reconciliation. The negotiations, moderated by UN special representative of the secretary general Bernardino Leon, started in mid-January 2015 and have thus far been fruitful. The next round of talks, scheduled for March, will address the formation of a unified government; security arrangements, to include ceasefire,

²³¹ Reeve, “Libya’s Proxy Battlefield,” 2014.

²³² Ahmed Tolba and Ayman al-Warfalli, “Libyan PM Says Turkey Supplying Weapons to Rival Tripoli Group,” Reuters, February 27, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/02/27/us-libya-security-turkey-idUSKBN0LV1S120150227>.

²³³ Reeve, “Libya’s Proxy Battlefield,” 2014.

²³⁴ Hasan Masiky, “Libya: Moroccan Mediation Could Bring Muslim Brotherhood and General Haftar Closer,” *Morocco World News*, February 27, 2015, <http://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2015/02/152723/libya-moroccan-mediation-bring-muslim-brotherhood-general-haftar-closer/>.

withdrawal, and disarmament/arms control; and the completion of a constitution.²³⁵ Facilitating these talks should be the first priority of the United Nations support mission in Libya (UNSMIL), as a peaceful resolution will put an end to a civil war that is spiraling out of control. As mentioned earlier, if Morocco is capable of convincing the Arab states to end their proxy battles, negotiations will have a higher chance of success. The alternative is to let Libya collapse, much like Somalia, with which it shares similar problems of armed groups, Islamists, fractious governmental groups, and missed opportunities for peace.²³⁶

The UN must also be cognizant of the previous regime's mistakes. Too often, Libyans have repeated Gaddafi's failed policies. As discussed in Chapter III, the political-isolation law and Law 37 were examples of the government's resorting to repressive tactics; these laws were present during the first UN-advised transition to the NTC. A "lack of innovation...[produces] the same problematic environment that had caused the conflict in the first place."²³⁷ The UN should recognize these pitfalls and exercise caution.

The UN has the ability to press for better support in EUBAM. EUBAM has suffered from a lack of volunteers, and the complicated political structure in Libya makes it difficult for EUBAM to operate and train border forces.²³⁸ Though border security is only a supporting effort, at this juncture in Libya's revolution, its byproduct is a more professional border force and better understanding of the potential threats that flow through the porous borders.

Finally, the UN must consider deploying a stabilization force, particularly as part of or subsequent to the forthcoming ceasefire. The mandate for the force must be limited to discrete tasks, such as protecting infrastructure, enabling democratic processes, and

²³⁵ "UNSMIL Announces Libyan Political Dialogue to Resume this Week, Calls for Immediate Ceasefire," UNSMIL, last Modified March 03, 2015, <http://unsmil.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=3543&mid=6187&ItemID=2006857>.

²³⁶ Reeve, "Libya's Proxy Battlefield," 2014.

²³⁷ Abdallah Hadeed, "Dialogue in Libya: Challenges and Conditions of Success," Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre, January 2015, 4.

²³⁸ Pusztai, "A Western Strategy for Libya," 3

responding to humanitarian violations. A tailored scope allows the UN to project realistic and achievable troop requests. The chances for success of a stabilization force are high, because members of the Misrata and Zintani militias and the SSC support a stabilization force if the force consists of neutral parties, such as a Scandinavian country or Australia.²³⁹

C. CONCLUSION

Libya is a vector for violence, held together by loosely formed coalitions of militias. Historically, isolation from the West, coupled with the intentional weakening of political institutions, created a social capital deficit that would carry over into the 17 February Revolution. Libya has since devolved into civil war and is at risk of becoming a failed state and destabilizing the region. ISIS has used the fog of war to make headway into Libya and begun a campaign of violence, recruiting, and seizing territory in the name of the global caliphate. The deleterious effects of the turmoil in Libya are far reaching, but not insurmountable.

This study concentrated on Libya's evolution from an independent state, to a state under Gaddafi, and thence to a state in the throes of civil war. The purpose of this research is to assist stability efforts by examining Libya's recent history and identifying systemic issues with bureaucratic and economic institutions, security, rule of law, and society.

Too often, Western thinking defaults to Western solutions. This study focused on finding a Libyan solution to Libya's instability, recommending that Libya must reconcile their lack of social trust in political parties, among competitive militias, and in public institutions and then turn their attention to ISIS and economic reform. The UN will play a crucial role in brokering a resolution between the governments in Tobruk and Tripoli. Only by confronting the practical realities of Libya's history, culture, and people can a lasting and equitable peace be designed and maintained.

²³⁹ Wehrey, "Ending Libya's Civil War," 29-30.

D. OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future efforts should focus on the specifics (at a micro, not macro, level) of bringing stability to Libya. These findings could then be combined with an international application; for example, by finding a successful model for a dual Islamic and state court system that can provide a framework for Libya's judiciary and ensure a Libyan solution.

Another area that needs more development is the process of reconciliation. The literature generally agrees that the two sides (JCP/NFA) need to reconcile, but offers very little in how to accomplish this task. DDR and SSR are often cited, but these do not get to the central issue of why the militias, armed groups, and VEOs exist in the first place. Applying practical guidelines in how states can take unaffiliated militias and turn them into long-term actors for the state would prove beneficial.

The prospect of Libyan federalism was not examined in this study. A weaker central government in Libya may help reduce the use of regional militias. If the central government can agree to exercise control over gas and oil, meanwhile allowing the provinces to remain relatively autonomous—with a stipulation for collective defense—this arrangement may be palatable for all parties.

Libya is at a tipping point and reducing the trust deficit is at the core of the issues Libya faces today. Before improving the civilian and industrial sectors, security must be established, followed by the repurposing of militias. The current UN-led negotiations are a positive step that signifies hope for Libya. Solutions must be found to reconcile differences, or both the GNC and the HoR will be fighting a war on two fronts: against each other, and against ISIS, which thrives in unstable regions and will grow stronger as civil war continues. Alternatively, as a house divided, Libya will fail and become a regional vector for instability.

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